

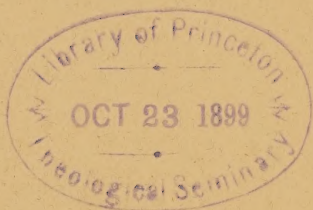
PRESENT DAY TRACTS,  
*CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE,*  
*DOCTRINE, AND MORALS.*



REYNOLDS  
MITCHELL

KAUFMANN  
SIMON

STANLEY LEATHES



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Present day tracts










PRESENT DAY TRACTS.



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# PRESENT DAY TRACTS

ON SUBJECTS OF

Christian Evidence, Doctrine, and Morals.

BY VARIOUS WRITERS.

...—...  
*VOLUME XIV.*

*Comprising Nos. 79 to 84, which may also be had separately.*



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE ground of Christian thought covered by the Fourteenth Volume of the Present Day Series of Tracts is both interesting and wide. It will be found that the subjects treated come in no consecutive order, nor are they connected together by any very close link.

In importance of subject the Tract entitled *The Trinity in Sacred History*, by Rev. D. W. Simon, D.D., should be placed *first*. The subject is one that stands at the very threshold of the object of the Series, and yet, owing to its admitted difficulty, has not hitherto found a place on the list. Dr. Simon handles the subject not by the process of abstract reasoning, nor by minutely defining the relation of the Three Persons, but by the simple and more satisfactory method of examining the references in the Scriptures to the Godhead. The section which deals with the Godhead of the Lord Jesus is one that will repay the most careful study.

The subject just alluded to naturally leads to a reference to the brilliant Essay which has also the sad distinction of being the last literary product of its author, Dr. Reynolds' Tract entitled, *Who say ye that I am?* Here also by powerful reasoning the revered author shows, first, that Jesus of Nazareth was

true Man, and, next, that He was more than Man, even the Incarnate God.

Passing from these grand doctrines, which are proved from the Scriptures, the credibility of these Sacred Oracles themselves demand attention. And on this subject Dr. Stanley Leathes furnishes a well-grounded argument relating to *The Testimony of the Earlier Prophetic Writings to the Primal Religion of Israel*. He controverts the modern theory that the Pentateuch existed only in a vague and floating condition before the time of the Prophets, and that it was not arranged as it at present exists until after the Exile. And he does so by bringing together the references to the Law as found in those Prophets who wrote before the Exile. The cumulative evidence thus furnished is a striking and undesigned witness to the early existence of the Pentateuch.

In this restless age of search after some new cult, various minds have fastened upon various beliefs which, in their opinion, should displace the Christian faith as the impulse and the guide of life. Some have supposed that in a mode of thought akin to that accepted by the followers of Zoroaster, higher aims of life and worthier motives can be found than in following Christ. The frame of mind which can thus reason is skilfully met by the Rev. M. Kaufmann in *Some Modern Views of Zoroastrianism examined in the Light of Christianity*. The Tract will probably appeal to comparatively few readers, and yet it will be for them, and for those whose minds run in the same channel, most useful.



Others, again, have sought to substitute culture for Christ. The same author shows, in his *Essay on Culture and Christianity*, that the religion of Christ moves on a plane altogether above that of modern culture ; and brings out the fact that the truest culture, both in the individual and in the nation, is a product of the religion of Christ Jesus.

The last Tract to be considered is entitled *Non-Christian Religions : their State and Prospects*. Its author is Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, D.D., than whom there is none more competent to write helpfully upon the subject. He makes no attempt to treat of comparative religion, but takes a broad survey of the condition of each living religion, and appraises the prospect of its growth or decadence.

Authors who appear for the first time in this Volume are Rev. Stanley Leathes, D.D., and Rev. D. W. Simon, D.D.

That the God of truth may bless these pages is the earnest desire of the Committee ; and if they should be the means of winning to a clearer grasp of truth any who have been troubled by doubt, or of establishing any who already hold dear the truths of the Christian faith, the object of the Committee in issuing this Volume will be amply repaid.

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OF THE  
EARLIER PROPHETIC WRITERS  
TO THE  
PRIMAL RELIGION OF ISRAEL.

BY THE  
REV. STANLEY LEATHES, D.D.,

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*'THE LAW IN THE PROPHETS,' ETC.*



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

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## Argument of the Tract.

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OF recent years many Biblical scholars have come to the conclusion that instead of the proverbial phrase, "The Law and the Prophets" (Matt. v. 17 ; Acts xiii. 15 ; xxviii. 23, etc.), the true order of time was "The Prophets and the Law."

Whatever "Law" existed was, they affirm, in a vague and floating condition, and was not arranged as we have it till after the Exile. The mission of the Prophets, therefore, was altogether original in itself, and had not been prepared for by any antecedent or written revelation. Consequently, the entire narrative of the early books of the Bible is un-historic and misleading. It has no right to its traditional position and value.

This conclusion, thus nakedly stated, is sufficiently surprising. The question is, how far it can be established. The examination of such a question is one that the ordinary reader is not qualified to undertake. There are, however, certain broad features of the argument that he is competent to understand. For example, if it can be shown that the writings of the early Prophets bear evidence minute and undesigned, but sufficiently cumulative to be weighty and significant, to the substantive framework of the Levitical system, and cannot be understood but on the supposition of its existence ; and if, moreover, their language shows traces of acquaintance with, allusion to and quotation from the language of the Law as we have it, the supposition that the Law was subsequent to the Prophets is seen to be untenable. It involves an inversion that is contrary at once to evidence and to probability.

A sketch of this evidence is given in the following Tract in a form that the ordinary student of the Bible can understand. It is by no means exhaustively stated, but may be seen more fully in *The Law in the Prophets* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1891). Professor Robertson's *Early Religion of Israel* may be also studied with advantage as tending to confirm the position.

# THE TESTIMONY OF THE EARLIER PROPHETIC WRITERS TO THE PRIMAL RELIGION OF ISRAEL.



IN the following pages an attempt is made to show—

Position  
stated.

1. That the earlier prophets of Israel and Judah, *i.e.*, those of the eighth century B.C., distinctly recognise the main features, both in doctrine and in ritual, of the religion set forth in the Pentateuch and the early historical writings of the nation.

2. That the most rational explanation of this fact is that this religion, and the books which inculcate it, existed and were held as authoritative before the time of these Prophets.

3. That special phrases and allusions found in these prophetic writings afford further cumulative and irresistible evidence in support of the same conclusion.

These positions are maintained in opposition to the theory that the Law of Moses, as we

have it, is possibly, with some insignificant exceptions, all later than Deuteronomy, and that Deuteronomy itself is of the seventh century B.C. On this supposition the writings of the Prophets of the eighth century could not bear any evidence at all of the Mosaic Law being known and observed in their days, inasmuch as they lived a hundred years before its introduction. Now, all that we know of the early religion of Israel is what remains to us in the Mosaic Law. Any further knowledge of it is purely conjectural. But if there is any evidence of acquaintance with this law, as we have it, in the writings of the Prophets, that, it would seem, would be sufficient to carry the entire position. If the Prophets knew the Law of Moses, as we have it, then that Law, whether it was observed or violated, was the standard which was known and recognised by the people and Prophets alike, and no other.

Theory  
combated.

### WHICH ARE THE EARLIER PROPHETS?

In endeavouring to estimate the nature and value of this testimony, we must first decide which of the Prophets we are to examine. There can be no doubt about HOSEA and AMOS, while JOEL has always been regarded as a very early writer, till recent times, when a certain school of critics

Which are  
the earlier  
Prophets?



have preferred to hold that he must be placed much later. NAHUM also is generally regarded as having lived and written towards the end of the eighth century before Christ, or very shortly after its close; and ISAIAH must, as to the whole or at least a part of his writings, be included in the list of earlier prophecies.

In the writings, therefore, of the Minor Prophets, from Hosea to Nahum, and in the Book of Isaiah, we must discover, if possible, any evidence they may contain as to the primal religion of Israel.

Before proceeding to give examples of the early traces of the religion of Israel, I ought, perhaps, to say why I regard Joel as an early prophet, and am as unwilling to believe in a second Isaiah as I should be to believe in a second Milton. Not that I stand alone in these opinions, or am unmindful of the arguments directed against them. For instance, in the case of Joel, Canon Driver, after giving the evidence, such as it is, on both sides, is content to say that certain points 'must be allowed to turn the balance *somewhat strongly* in favour of the later date' (p. 291). (The italics are mine.) But is it not possible that others who weigh the evidence as given by him may form a different opinion or may demur to his? The late Dean Milman, who certainly was no mean critic, expressed himself very strongly on the opposite side.<sup>1</sup>

Grounds for  
placing Joel  
and Isaiah  
in the list.

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Jews*, vol. i., p. 370, n. 8vo edit.

The  
existence of  
the Mosaic  
Law  
presumed.

It must always be borne in mind that in a matter of this kind everything is coloured by the position we assume. I assume, provisionally be it remembered, the existence of the Mosaic Law, and acquaintance with its language on the part of the writer and his public; and *on that supposition* I can show that the language of the Prophet accords naturally therewith. Canon Driver assumes, not provisionally but absolutely, that the law was post-Exilic, and examines the language of the Prophet accordingly, which he finds supports his own conclusion, though still, as he says, only ‘*somewhat strongly.*’ To me it seems exceedingly doubtful whether, on the supposition of the late origin of the Law, Joel’s language would have been what it is; and this is a doubt which I feel more than ‘*somewhat strongly.*’ Again, I think it highly improbable that after the Captivity Zion would have been spoken of as Joel speaks of it, and that after such a break in the national continuity as the Exile had occasioned, the traditional sanctity of Zion would have reverted to it in the way that the Prophet’s language implies. It seems to me much more consonant with a time when that sanctity was a present and an acknowledged fact, in consequence of events which were well remembered. For example, Zion ceases to be mentioned as a centre of national worship in any of the known post-Captivity writings, except in

Joel’s  
reference  
to Zion.

the first nine chapters of Zechariah, and in some of the later Psalms, *e.g.*, cxxxvii. 1, 3, where it is spoken of rather as a reminiscence. Note also the rare mention of Zion in the Apocrypha and the New Testament. Whereas in all the earlier Prophets it is constantly mentioned as the present and known dwelling-place of God. (It is mentioned also in the *history* of David and Solomon, 1 Chron. xi. 5; 2 Chron. v. 2.) Now, this is a fact of which the significance appears to me to be 'somewhat' more than 'strong.'

Again, with regard to the second part of Isaiah, even if Isaiah's name had been prefixed to the last twenty-seven chapters, that would have weighed as nothing in the estimation of the critics, seeing that they deny to him the 13th chapter, to which it is so prefixed. In fact, Prof. Cheyne, in his last book, speaks of the supposition of 'a second Isaiah' as out of date, and attributes the work to several authors and editors. Here again, our decision will greatly depend upon our previous conceptions of the nature of prophecy. Such passages as xlv. 28; xlv. 1; lxiv. 10, 11 (*cf.* i. 7, 8), and the like, offer insuperable difficulties except on the supposition of supernatural teaching, which is *in limine* rejected by the critics. But is this any reason for shutting our eyes to the positive evidence that confronts us, and to analogous difficulties in Scripture,

Question of  
authorship  
of latter  
part of  
Isaiah.

such as 1 Sam. ii. 35; 1 Kings xiii. 2; Matt. xxvi. 21?

Reference to  
my note on  
*Authorship  
of Isaiah.*

I may, perhaps, be allowed to refer to a note on *The Authorship of Isaiah*, written nearly thirty years ago in my Boyle Lectures for 1868, in reply to the arguments of Dean Stanley, which, though it may not be exhaustive, has, I may venture to say, never been confuted. And I may add that this is one of those questions which it is difficult to settle except to the individual satisfaction of those who regard the evidence from an objective or from a subjective point of view, as the case may be. The facts are what they are on both sides. No fresh evidence can be adduced. It is a question not of evidence, but of the weighing of evidence. I have friends who are as firmly persuaded of the late date of a great portion of Isaiah as I am of the unity and integrity of his book; and I have friends who share my own conviction; and yet, on both sides, we are acquainted with all the facts.

A great  
writer the  
product of a  
great age.

My opinion as to the unity of the book has with me the force of a deep conviction. I may say but this, to which I know no answer: that a great writer is the product of a great age; a first-rate poet does not arise in the period of a nation's decadence. Isaiah is the greatest of the Hebrew Prophets—chaps. xl.–lxvi. are his greatest work. At the close of the Captivity the nation was at

its lowest. The *known* literature of the period partakes of this character: the latter portion of Isaiah presents the greatest possible contrast therewith. Is it more in accordance with experience or with fact that he should have been the contemporary of Haggai, than that he should have flourished under that king from whose capital the greatest of Assyrian monarchs had retreated with disaster and disgrace?

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE EARLIER PROPHETS.

We will now proceed to consider the evidence contained in the earlier prophetic writers to the Primal Religion of Israel. I begin then with

#### HOSEA. (ABOUT B.C. 785-725.)

It must not be forgotten that Hosea was a Hosea. prophet of the northern kingdom, and that his message primarily was addressed to Israel. This was at the time when the house of Jehu was in possession of the throne, and when Jeroboam II. had raised the northern kingdom to its highest eminence of power and glory. The testimony, therefore, of this Prophet is that of an independent and unprejudiced mind that cannot be suspected of bias from being under the influence of the kingdom of Judah. What then are the conclusions we may derive from the facts and character of his writings?



Use of the  
name LORD,  
i.e.,  
*Jehovah*.

Hosea 1. 1.

His book opens thus: 'The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea;' and if this is regarded as the heading of an editor merely, we have in the next verse, 'The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea.' It is to be observed here that the Prophet begins his narrative, which is manifestly a personal one, in the third person, though in the third chapter he passes into the first. The same thing is found in Deut. i. 1, 9, and Isaiah vi. 1; vii. 3, not to mention many other places, showing that it was customary with the Hebrew writers to adopt both methods. Again, the use of the phrase, 'The word of the LORD,' carries us back to 1 Sam. iii. 1, the first time it seems to be used in this technical sense; after which it becomes very common with reference to the Prophets.

This memorable name *Jehovah* must either point back to Exod. vi. 3 (*cf.* iii. 14, 15), or on the theory of the late origin of these passages, the reference in Hosea must be one of the instances of the use of that name which they were occasioned by, and were intended to explain. In either case, the use of the name with reference to Israel is to be noted, and tends to show that the political schism had not destroyed the sense of relationship to a God worshipped by both branches of the nation, who both alike were familiar with the same name. This, at all events, gives the strongest probability

that the knowledge and worship of Jehovah must date from a period prior to the division of the kingdom.

Again, the basis of the Prophet's message was that 'the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD' (i. 2). Then surely at one time the union had been closer, and the obligation of a conjugal relationship recognised, otherwise the reproach of the Prophet would have been unintelligible. But what was the origin of this conception? Why was it that the nation was supposed to be joined by conjugal ties to Jehovah? This is a question which does not find an adequate answer apart from the history as recorded in the earlier books. This appears indeed to be the earliest use by the Prophets of a figure very commonly adopted by them, *e.g.*, Isa. liv. 5, 'Thy Maker is thine husband'; Jer. iii. 14, 'I am married unto you,' and the like; but it is clearly based upon and derived from such passages as Exod. xxxiv. 15: 'They go a whoring after their gods'; Lev. xx. 5: 'Commit whoredom with Molech,' and the like; which imply the application of the marriage relationship to the covenant bond between God and His people. This idea, in fact, runs through the whole of Scripture; but it assuredly presupposes some fact, such as is recorded in the history, as its basis; and it is hard to say what this is, if it is not to be found

Hosea 1. 2.

Marriage a figure of the covenant relationship with God.

indicated in germ in the second commandment, which speaks of God as a *jealous* God.<sup>1</sup> Everywhere Israel is regarded as being in covenant with God, and the violation of this covenant is spoken of as spiritual fornication; while in the Prophets it is yet further compared to the infringement of the marriage vow.

I take it, then, that Hosea would not have adopted this language, and enforced it with the illustration that he uses, unless he had such a framework of fact to fall back upon as is supplied by the history of the giving of the Law, and by the character of the Law itself. While it is evident that there must have been in the people addressed sufficient knowledge of the like facts to make his language intelligible to them. If there had not been in the past history of Israel something which gave colour to and warranted the notion of a very close bond between Israel and the Lord, the people would hardly have understood the language of Hosea, nor would he himself have used it. And the fact that in every case it was Jehovah who was thus regarded, is a strong proof of some original unity in the national worship, which is accounted for by the history as we have it, but which without that history is an unsolved problem.

A close bond  
between  
Israel and  
God pre-  
supposed.

<sup>1</sup> See also Exod. xx. 5; xxxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 24; v. 9; vi. 15; cf. Num. xxv. 11.

In the words, i. 6: 'I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel,' there is apparently an echo of Exod. xxxiii. 19: 'I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.' In the severe reprobation of the sin of adultery by the Prophet it would seem that the authority of the seventh commandment was recognised and known, even if it was forgotten and set at nought. Hosea 1. 6.

In iii. 1 the phrase, 'Who look to other gods,' implies that the ideal religion was the worship of one God only, while the phrase itself is identical with that of Lev. xix. 4: '*Turn ye not unto idols,*' and Deut. xxxi. 18, 20: 'They are *turned unto* other gods,' 'Then will they *turn unto* other gods.' Is this accidental, or does not the identity of the language point to a much closer connection and to a common source? Hosea 3. 1.

Chap. ii. 11: 'I will . . . cause to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.' These words in the original are all in the singular—a very simple indication of a definite and well-known ordinance. This in the case of the Sabbath is undeniable, Exod. xx. 8; nor is it otherwise with the new moon (*cf.* Num. x. 10). Hosea 2. 11.

Reference to  
Sabbath  
and feasts.

Verse 13: 'I will visit upon her the days of the Baalim' (R.V.); probably referring to the two calves set up by Jeroboam in Bethel and in Dan. Hosea 2. 13.

Hosea 2. 18. Verse 18: 'I will make a covenant for them.' This may not improbably be taken as an instance of the familiarity of the people with the idea of a covenant with God, such as that of Gen. xvii. 13; Exod. xix. 5.

Hosea 2. 20. Chap. ii. 20: 'Thou shalt know the LORD,' compared with 'Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD,' 1 Sam. iii. 7, implies the necessity of a more intimate knowledge than a conventional recognition, *cf.* iv. 1.

Hosea 3. 4. Chap. iii. 4: 'Without an ephod,' must surely presuppose Exod. xxviii. 4, or else this precept was suggested by passages like this and Judg. xvii. 5; while these must be admitted to remain unexplained.

Hosea 4. 4. Chap. iv. 4: 'Thy people are as they that strive with the priest,' surely involves the knowledge of Deut. xvii. 12, 'The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest,' etc., or else this precept was suggested by the words in Hosea; let common sense decide which is likely.

Hosea 4. 6. Chap. iv. 6: 'Thou shalt be no priest to Me.' This, again, must be a reminiscence of Exod. xix. 6: 'Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests,' for what reason otherwise should Israel expect to be a priest unto the Lord? The rest of the verse also, 'Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God,' gives the ground upon which the former

promise was built. 'If ye obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant . . . ye shall, etc.' The reference to the 'law' also may be as reasonably *assumed* to refer to the Law of Moses as not to do so. In either case we must *assume* something—the only question is, which assumption is the more rational and the more natural.

Verse 13: 'They sacrifice upon the tops of Hosea 4. 13.  
the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills,' *cf.* the indictment of the later Prophets, Isa. i. 29; lvii. 5, 7; lxxv. 7; Jer. ii. 20, and Ezek. vi. 13; xx. 28; the last of these certainly knew and recognised the Deuteronomic law.. Where is the proof that Isaiah and Hosea did not? At all events, it is assumed by the Prophet here that what was done was forbidden, and contrary to the Divine will.

Verse 15: 'Nor swear, The LORD liveth': the Hosea 4. 15.  
first instance of this phrase as an oath is Judg. viii. 19 (*cf.* Num. xiv. 21, 28.) As the Book of Judges must be assigned to a period before the time of David (*cf.* Judg. i. 21, and 2 Sam. v. 6), we see that the use of this phrase as an oath must be placed at least as early as two centuries before the time of Hosea; consequently, this name 'Jehovah' was recognised as the special covenant name of God from very early times, nor is there anything to invalidate the statement of Exod. iii. 15; vi. 3.



Hosea 5. 10. Chap. v. 10: 'The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound.' This is strong confirmatory evidence of acquaintance with the Law, Deut. xix. 14, and of the curse pronounced on its violation, Deut. xxvii. 17.

Hosea 7. 8. Chap. vii. 8: 'Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people.' This is an illustration of the original calling of Israel, Exod. xix. 5, 6.

Hosea 7. 12. Chap. vii. 12: 'I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard,' is a very probable indication of the ordinance prescribed Deut. xxvii. 11, and the curses threatened, Deut. xxviii. 15, etc.

Hosea 8. 1. Chap. viii. 1: 'He shall come as an eagle against the *house of the* LORD, because they have transgressed My covenant, and trespassed against My law:' a remarkable charge to be brought against Israel in the days of Jeroboam II., if there was no knowledge of the earlier history and no acquaintance with the Law.

Hosea 9. 4. Chap. ix. 4: 'They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD,' etc. Wine had been prescribed as part of the offerings, Lev. xxiii. 13; Num. xv. 5, 7, 10, and xxviii. 14. It was manifestly common in idolatrous sacrifices, Deut. xxxii. 38.

Hosea 9. 5. Verse 5: 'What will ye do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the LORD?' Cf. Lev. xxiii. 2, etc., 'Concerning the feasts of the Lord.' The word *moged* is more frequently

used of the *congregation*, but here and elsewhere it is used of the solemn days or *set feasts*. Were these feasts something accidentally arising, or had they been appointed by a recognised law?

Chap. x. 8: 'The high places also of Aven, Hosea 10. 8.  
the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed.' This, if not a witness to the violated law of the central sanctuary is at least proof that Hosea regarded Jeroboam I. as one 'who made Israel to sin.'

Chap. xi. 2: 'They sacrificed unto *the* Baalim, Hosea 11. 2.  
and burned incense to graven images' (R.V.). The latter, in this form, are not mentioned in the Pentateuch, except three times in Deut. vii. 5, 25; xii. 3.

Chap. xii. 9: 'I, that am the LORD thy God Hosea 12. 9.  
from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast.' A remarkable witness to a custom corresponding with that of Lev. xxiii. 42, 43, even verbally: see the context. The Prophet, however, uses *tents* instead of *booths*: 'that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt' (Lev. xxiii. 42, 43.)

Such, then, is the evidence supplied by Hosea Hosea's  
evidence  
considered.  
to the nature of the early religion of Israel. There underlies the whole of his prophecy the charge of unfaithfulness to the God who called Himself Jehovah, and who claimed to be, and was

regarded as being, united to His people by the bond and obligation of a conjugal relationship. That this religion in many points of detail bears a strong resemblance to that which is depicted in the Pentateuch is undeniable; while the correctness of the inference which regards them as identical is shown almost to demonstration by the many indications of verbal acquaintance with the books of the Law as we have them, which have been collected by me in *The Law in the Prophets*. I am bold to believe that the ordinary unbiassed reader who studies the two, will come to the fixed conclusion not only that the Prophet was as well acquainted with these books as we are, but that they were regarded by him as the standard of the national faith and practice from which Israel had so deeply departed.

We pass on to examine the writings of

JOEL. (ABOUT B.C. 800.)

Joel 1. 1.

Importance  
of name  
Jehovah.

Here, as before, the prophecy is introduced as 'The word of the LORD'; a proof, at all events, that Joel, as well as Hosea, claimed the commission of the Being who had revealed Himself as Jehovah. This fact really lies at the root of the entire Old Testament message, for if the name LORD or Jehovah was a self-chosen one by the people, just as Chemosh was the god of Moab, Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, then it ceases

to have any more authoritative significance than those names ; while the message conveyed by it is at once dishonoured and depreciated—it becomes a mere literary curiosity, of no more intrinsic value, and perhaps in this respect of less, than the literature of Moab would be, supposing it to exist and to be discovered. We must determine the significance and importance of the words, ‘This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations,’ if we would estimate the claims of the message enforced by it, and enunciated with its authority.

The first reference in Joel to the religion of his day is found in chap. i. 9: ‘The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD.’ This is such a distinct witness to the customary ritual of the Temple that it is no wonder certain critics have relegated the Prophet to the days of the second Temple, after the Return. If the Prophet is early, this is as strong a proof as we can well have of the existence of the laws dealing with the meat offering and the drink offering ; as is the expression: ‘The priests, the LORD’s ministers,’ of verse 9 and 13, and the ‘solemn assembly’ of verse 14. It is impossible to insist upon these points till we have determined the Prophet’s era ; but if he was of the same date as Hosea, or even of the same century, then the matter is virtually decided, and this first

Joel 1. 9.

The meat offering.

Joel 2. 1. chapter is a standing witness to the ritual of the first Temple, and its correspondence with the Mosaic Law. Compare again chap. ii. 1: 'Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain;' where we have not only the same features, but also that recognition of Zion as the chosen dwelling-place of God, which is explained only by the history in Samuel, and the constant allusions in Deuteronomy, to a place not yet determined.

Joel 2. 26. The allusion to 'praising the name of the LORD' in ii. 26 is very probably a witness to the practice prescribed in Lev. xix. 24, and alluded to Deut. xvi. 14; xxvi. 12, 13. Indeed, it is only by a comparison of the words of Joel in many places, with the language of the Law as we have it, that we can arrive at any notion of what the religion of Israel at that time can have been; but the evidence that the Prophet was well acquainted with the Mosaic Law is so strong that we may reasonably assume that the customs and belief to which he bears witness were actually then in vogue according to the Levitical ordinances.

#### AMOS. (ABOUT B.C. 790.)

Amos 1. 2. Chap. i. 2: 'The LORD will roar from Zion.' The same recognition of the Divine name and of the Divine dwelling-place as before.

Chap. ii. 12: 'Ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink' (R.V.), contrary to the law, Num. vi. 3. This class of persons existed in Israel in the time of Amos, and the law concerning them would seem to have been in existence also.

Amos 2. 12.

Mention of  
Nazirites.

Chap. iv. 4: 'Bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes.' The mention of tithes with sacrifices points to the existence of a custom similar at all events to that prescribed in the Law; it is not likely to have existed among the surrounding heathen nations. This conclusion is strengthened by the mention also of leaven and free-will offerings. The word here used for leaven is not found so much as once elsewhere, except in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, where it occurs ten times. There is another name for leaven which is also used five times, but only in these books. Were these passages written to illustrate this, or is this a witness to the use there prescribed?

Amos 4. 4.

Tithes.

Chap. v. 21: 'I hate, I despise your feast days.' This and similar expressions found in the Prophets are frequently appealed to as indicating a spirit on their part antagonistic to the ritual of the Law, and showing it to be a later invention. But this is an unwarrantable inference. It would be about as reasonable to say that because our Lord enforced the statement of Hosea, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' therefore He could not have said 'One

Amos 5. 21.



jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled' (Matt. v. 18).

Spiritual  
require-  
ments of the  
Law  
enforced  
by the  
Prophets.

The explanation, of course, is that it was the function of the Prophets to insist on the *spiritual* requirements of the Law, and to remind the nation that external compliance with its precepts was not a substitute for the judgment, mercy, and truth which it prescribed. It would be about as consistent to maintain that the words vi. 8: 'I abhor the excellency of Jacob,' contradicted what had been written of the Divine favour and preference shown to Jacob in Genesis and elsewhere.

Amos 8. 3.

Chap. viii. 3: 'The songs of the Temple shall be howlings in that day,' is clear witness to the use of music in the Temple services; and yet no provision had been made for this in the Pentateuch—it was a later modification adopted by David. On the supposition of the late origin of the Law, it would be the more remarkable that all mention of it should have been omitted in the legislation. As a matter of fact, the evidence of Amos is conclusive as to his acquaintance with the Law of Moses as we have it, whether it be designated as the Priest's Code, Jehovist, Elohist, or Deuteronomist. Apart from these numerous indications of his acquaintance therewith, it is not easy to gather very definite notions of what the early religion of Israel was; but if Amos knew the Pentateuch, as he manifestly did, that of itself

The evidence  
of Amos  
considered.

supplies the knowledge that we seek. The fundamental fact that requires to be explained is the universal adoption of the name Jehovah by the Prophets, and the covenant relation between God and His people which they, one and all alike, acknowledge and presuppose.

MICAH. (B.C. 750-710.)

Chap. i. 2: 'Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is; and let the LORD God be witness against you, the LORD from His holy Temple.' Here we have (1) The recognition of Jehovah as the God of peoples, and of the earth and its fulness, not merely as a local God: (2) The belief that He was cognisant of His people's sin: (3) The implied acknowledgment that He had made the Temple of Solomon His dwelling-place. As one of the goodly fellowship of the prophets Micah bears the like testimony with all his fellows. Micah 1. 2.

Chap. iii. 8: 'Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.' Here we have the recognition of God as the source of power, judgment, and truth, and of His hatred of transgression and sin; that is to say, of the violation of His moral law by iniquity and bloodshed, which, therefore, although perpetrated, had been forbidden. The 'judging' Micah 3. 8.  
  
Micah's  
recognition  
of Jehovah.

for reward' of verse 11 had been expressly forbidden in identical language, *Exod.* xxiii. 8; *Deut.* x. 17; xvi. 19.

**Micah 4. 1.** Chap. iv. 1: 'The mountain of the house of the LORD' witnesses again to the acknowledged holiness of Zion on account of its selection as the Divine dwelling-place.

**Micah's  
testimony  
considered.**

It is impossible to separate the testimony of Micah to the early religion of Israel from his frequent use of and allusion to the earliest national literature. His constant rebuke of the people for their violation of the moral law might just as reasonably be taken as proof that that Law was unknown, and had not been given, as any other instances of apparent violation of the ritual law might be regarded as evidence that that also was unknown and non-existent.

The above are only a few of the cases that might be named.

#### NAHUM. (ABOUT B.C. 720.)

**The  
knowledge  
of Jehovah  
revealed to  
Israel.**

It is often suggested and implied that the Jehovah of the Israelites was a merely local or national God, like Chemosh of the Moabites, or Baal of the Syrians, and the like; and, of course, if the religion of Israel is regarded as something which arose from within the nation in the same way that the worship of Chemosh arose among the Moabites, this must be so. If the worship of

Jehovah differed only from that of Chemosh by reason of its intrinsic superiority, then it becomes conceivably open to question whether it was superior, and this may turn out to be after all merely a matter of opinion and taste. It would, however, still have to be explained why, if it was superior, it came to be so. Was this due merely to the happy accident of Israel's invention, or of the nation's constitution; or was there another actual and objective reason in the fact of Divine communication and revelation, to which the history everywhere lays claim? Surely, so far as the one religion really was intrinsically superior to the other, this tends to confirm rather than disprove the claim advanced by the history.

It is against these claims that the tide of what is called critical opinion seems now to set; but if they are disproved and shown to be delusive, the religion is at once shifted on to a purely subjective basis, which becomes liable at any moment to be again displaced at the bidding of some other hypothesis. For this reason we cannot too earnestly insist upon the weighty fact that the knowledge of the truth is everywhere in Scripture referred to definite, positive, and objective action on the part of God.

Knowledge  
of the truth  
objectively  
revealed by  
God.

But that Jehovah was not regarded as a merely local Deity is nowhere more emphatically shown than in the opening of the prophet Nahum. The

The  
covenant  
God  
identified  
with the  
God of  
nature.

like teaching is inculcated in the first verse of Genesis (for I deny that there is any *personal* difference between Elohim and Jehovah), and in the fourth commandment, which may probably both be regarded as among the earliest utterances of Scripture. Hence in Nahum we have the complete identification of the covenant God with the God of nature, while the attributes ascribed to Him are those of the Decalogue and of the revelation to Moses, as recorded in the Pentateuch. It is all very well to call this last by the name of P., or J., or E.,<sup>1</sup> and so to relegate it to any period between the ninth and sixth century B.C.; but then two things follow: first, it obviously ceases to be historically trustworthy, on account of the vast interval of time, and, secondly, far more satisfactory and solid proof is required in support of the assertion than has been or can be adduced. The Old Testament is reduced to a condition of chaotic and coagulated pulp by this indiscriminate disruption of fragments, and this casual and precarious conjunction of them again; so that it becomes a matter of the greatest uncertainty how to read the several parts, and absolutely impossible to explain or account for them when read.

The un-  
satisfactory  
character  
of the  
hypotheses  
of  
Wellhausen,  
Kuenen, and  
Driver.

Let any one peruse the discordant hypotheses of Wellhausen, Kuenen, and Driver, and decide for himself whether or not the attempt is not one

<sup>1</sup> Priestly Code, Jehovist, and Elohist.

which pretends to explain the *obscurum per obscurius*, and instead of leading us to the promised light, leaves us in palpable and hopeless darkness. And for this supreme advantage we are invited to surrender that which comes to us with the authority of the Word of God.

ISAIAH. (ABOUT B.C. 760-698.)

There remains only the greatest of the Prophets to be interrogated as to the essential character of the primal religion of Israel.

Chap. i. 2: The first announcement of Isaiah is the Lord's fatherhood and ownership of Israel. I know that it is said that this is nothing more than was advanced by other nations with regard to their gods; but it is to be noted that the claim here is said to be made by God Himself as the Father of His people. Neither is it so evident what the special advantage is of attempting to show that the religion of Israel was but an offshoot or outgrowth of the nature-worship of surrounding nations, even supposing it were conclusively possible to do so, which, thank God, it is not. The nation is accused of forsaking the Lord, which implies the recognition of some sort of covenant with Him. 'Ethical Monotheism' alone will not explain this; we want something more definite and intelligible. I take it, the nation itself would have found it rather difficult to decide whether or

Isaiah 1. 2.

Fatherhood  
of God.



not their 'monolatry' had already passed into monotheism (Driver's *Deut.* p. xxviii.). But the people certainly knew what the transgression of the Lord's covenant meant, for there were historical landmarks of such a covenant, which could not be mistaken.

Isaiah i. 11. In i. 11 we have a fierce attack upon the prevalent sacrificial routine which was in vogue in the Prophet's time, together with the use of the technical language familiar to us in the law. This is intelligible if the legal and sacrificial system was known to the Prophet; it seems to be hardly so easy to account for if it was the development of two centuries after his time.

Mention of  
feasts.

In this Prophet we meet with mention of the 'incense' (i. 13), the 'meat offering' (lvii. 6), the 'day of restraint'<sup>1</sup> (i. 13), the 'solemn assemblies' (i. 13), the 'new moons' (i. 13, 14), the 'Sabbaths' (i. 13), the 'set feasts' (i. 14), the 'burnt offering' (i. 11, etc.), the 'oblation' (i. 13), the 'trespass offering' (liii. 10), and the 'fat of the kidneys' (xxxiv. 6). This can hardly fail to be regarded as sufficient testimony to the existence of a system corresponding with that of the so-called 'priestly code,' to which the date is assigned of some two centuries after Isaiah. The question, therefore, suggests itself whether this priestly code was

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen by the marginal reading of Joel i. 14, that this is the meaning of the Hebrew word translated there 'solemn assembly.'

fashioned on the slender outlines supplied by the Prophet's language, or whether an analogous system had long been in vogue which had existed in an unwritten form. Either of these conjectures seems highly improbable, and yet, if so, we are thrown back upon the traditional assumption; added to which, after the stern denunciations of the Prophet, it seems less probable that the priests would have readily occupied themselves in the composition of a work in many ways so contrary to the teaching of the Prophets. The critics seem, A dilemma. therefore, to be committed to this dilemma—either the Law existed before the Prophets, and was resisted and opposed by them; or else the Prophets existed before the Law, in which case, they and their work were strangely set at naught and contradicted by the inventors of the Law. Either hypothesis is confronted with difficulties of its own; and in deciding in favour of either we cannot escape from the inherent or apparent circumstances which beset also the alternative position.

Chap. ii. 2: If 'the mountain of the LORD's house was to be established in the top of the mountains,' it looks very much as if the Prophet also believed in the virtue of a central sanctuary, though he lived more than a hundred years before the imaginary Deuteronomist. It is clear also that he regards the Lord God of Israel as the Judge of all the earth, with a conviction as firm as

Isaiah 2. 2.Reference to  
Zion's  
sanctity.

that of Abraham; while his repeated mention of Zion as the special dwelling-place of God, and the source of Divine wisdom, is strong confirmation of the historical narrative which records the special circumstances which led to the selection of Zion.

Prophets in  
advance of  
the nation.

Isaiah 8. II.

It is of course obvious that the spiritual illumination of the Prophets was in advance of that of the nation (viii. 11); and consequently the tokens of their belief are no sure test of the faith of the people; but the function of the Prophets was to recall the nation to a higher standard, and to remind them that they had forgotten the covenant of their God; and this of itself presupposes a knowledge of the will of God which can only be explained by the revelation of the Law. In like manner, when Isaiah

Isaiah 16. 5.

says, xvi. 5: 'In mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness,' it shows that he fully believed in the promises made to the house of David, and looked to a reign of righteousness in connection with it. Cf. 2 Sam. vii. and Ps. lxxii.

Isaiah 17. 8.

Chap. xvii. 8: 'He shall not look to the altars, . . . the groves, or the images.' The prevalence of idolatry in the nation in the Prophet's time is very conspicuous; but the persistent complaint of it is likewise a witness to the Law which it violated, for without this objective basis he

would have lacked any positive standard to which to appeal; for it may be that without such a standard the advocates of idolatry would have defended themselves with as much zeal as they were assailed with. The historic revelation supplied a standard which both parties were constrained to recognise.

Chap. xix. 19: 'In that day there shall be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.' This passage is triumphantly quoted to show that the Prophet cannot have been aware of the denunciations in the Law against *mazzevoth* (pillars), or he would not have said this. But surely it is quite as natural to understand his words as giving the promise of the conversion of Egypt by the consecration to God of the tokens of its former idolatry. Even the Pantheon at Rome became afterwards, and is still, a Christian temple; and as such is 'a sign and a witness unto the LORD of Hosts' (Isaiah xix. 20) in a land that was pagan when it was built. The fascination of a theory is such as to overrule everything, whether reasonable or unreasonable, that interferes with its adoption.

Chap. xxvii. 13: 'They shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.' This

is surely a recognition of the principle of centralised worship a century before the ideal Deuteronomy is supposed to have been composed (Deut. xii. 5).

Isaiah 28. 16. Chap. xxviii. 16: 'Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone.' This is evidence of the same fact.

Isaiah 30. 19. Chap. xxx. 19: 'The people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem.' Whence these reiterated references to Zion, unless because it had been shown to be the place where the Lord would cause His name to dwell, and was, therefore, the centre of the national worship?

Isaiah 30. 29. Verse 29: 'Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel.' Here is a reference to a well-known custom of the Prophet's time, and it is connected with the musical ritual of centralised worship introduced by David. There is not a vestige of evidence that centralised worship was unrecognised till the imaginary discovery of Deuteronomy in the time of Josiah.

Isaiah 33. 20 Chap. xxxiii. 20: 'Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities.' Why so, but because of the worship of which it was the acknowledged centre, of which the incident recorded in 2 Sam. vi. is the original history?

Isaiah 36. 7. Chap. xxxvi. 7: 'Is not this he, whose high places

and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?' and this in the century before Josiah. The reformation had been begun; and what was the cause of it, if not the very Deuteronomy supposed to have been as yet not only undiscovered but even unwritten? And this is the spontaneous and unbiassed witness of an alien and an enemy.

Chap. xxxvii. 4: 'The living God.' This is a Isaiah 37. 4. remarkable expression also found in Deut. v. 23 (Heb.); Josh. iii. 10; 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36; 2 Kings xix. 4, 16; Ps. xlii. 3 (Heb.); lxxxiv. 2; Isa. xxxvii. 17; Jer. x. 10; xxiii. 36; Hosea i. 10, and nowhere else. In Deuteronomy the noun and adjective are plural, as also in 1 Samuel. In Joshua and Hosea, the noun and adjective are both singular, as also in the Psalms. In Jeremiah both are plural, and in Kings and Isaiah the noun is plural and the adjective singular.

Verse 16: The expression 'that dwellest between the cherubim,' is likewise a remarkable one, which occurs in 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2; 2 Kings xix. 15; 1 Chron. xiii. 6; Ps. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1, and nowhere else. All these passages must point to one and the same fact—that is to say, the recognition of the Ark of the Covenant as the symbol of the Divine presence



(Exod. xxv. 22), unless this ordinance of the Babylonian priestly code was written ages afterwards to explain hypothetically these passages. Let the English reader, whether learned or unlearned, judge.

Isaiah 37. 35. Chap. xxxvii. 35: 'I will defend this city for my servant David's sake,' a marvellous recognition of the received history of David.

Isaiah 40. 16. Chap. xl. 16: 'And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.' So the writer, whether before or after the Captivity, recognised the sacrificial system of the Law, to which the Prophets are supposed to be so inimical.

Isaiah 43. 12. Chap. xliii. 12: 'I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you.' This, then, is a proof that the original religion of Israel was the worship of the Lord without idols, as the next verses are that He was the creator of heaven and earth. In verses 23 and 24, the people are rebuked for not filling the Lord with the fat of their sacrifices. So far was the Prophet from being opposed to the sacrificial ritual.

Isaiah 44. 2. Chap. xliv. 2: 'Thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.' This poetic name of Israel is only found here and in Deut. xxxii. 15; xxxiii. 5, 26. With whom did it originate? Comparing the passages, we should certainly say with Deuteronomy.

An examination of the latter chapters of Isaiah serves only to corroborate the inferences already drawn. There are frequent references to Zion as the centre of worship, *e.g.*, chap. xlvi. 13: 'I will place salvation in Zion'; li. 3: 'The LORD shall comfort Zion'; lii. 1: 'Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion'; lix. 20: 'The Redeemer shall come to Zion': and many other places.

Isa. 46. 13;  
51. 3;  
52. 1;  
59. 20.

There is likewise the allusion to the marriage relationship with God which we found in Hosea; chap. liv. 5: 'Thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is His name'; lxii. 5: 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee;' but all these statements, though they presuppose a certain condition of the national mind, are rather of the nature of exhortations on the part of the Prophet, than witnesses to the primitive religion, or tokens of its actual character.

Allusion to  
marriage  
relation.

It must be understood that the evidence of the Prophets to the character of the early religion of Israel is to be seen in apparent indications there may be of their knowledge of the Mosaic Law. Under the supposition that the Law had been in existence, it is not probable that the fact would have been expressly stated in so many words; for why should it have been so? While, on the other hand, it is highly probable that the writings of the Prophets would have borne slight and un-

designed traces of acquaintance with its language and provisions. And it is exactly this which we do find. We have, in the Prophets whose writings we have been considering, a number of distinct allusions of various kinds. If the Book of Deuteronomy existed at the time we believe it did, we have in that book a key to all these references. Take away that book, and the references are inexplicable and meaningless. These references are in many cases verbal, and they are generally minute and insignificant in themselves, and oftentimes they might pass unobserved; but it is the very frequency of the parallelism which constitutes its strength, and the force of the evidence lies in its *cumulative* character, for it is impossible to account for it, manifold and multitudinous as it is when examined, except on one of two suppositions, namely, that it was designedly adopted by the original writers, or designedly adopted by some common editor, which, from the character of the phenomena, is absolutely impossible; or else it is to be accounted for in the way here suggested; and I cannot but think that in the long run this will commend itself to the unsophisticated reader as the only possible solution of the features presented, for it will be seen that the difficulties of accepting the modern theories far outweigh those connected with the position for which we contend.

The  
cumulative  
nature of  
the  
argument.

Take, for example, the language of the New Testament, and that of the Prayer Book, and the whole of our English literature, which in bulk infinitely exceeds that of the Old Testament.—The moment we meet in the newspapers, in common conversation, or elsewhere, with such expressions as—‘the fatted calf,’ ‘one jot or tittle,’ ‘more than we desire or deserve,’ ‘till death us do part,’ and a hundred others like them, we at once call to mind the phrases referred to, and cannot fail to trace them to their original source. Surely then if we find in the dozen or fifteen later books of the Old Testament phrase after phrase adopted from, and fact after fact implied or referred to in what we hold to be the earlier books of Moses and others,—and this, be it remembered, in a literature extremely limited and circumscribed,—it is impossible not to draw the conclusion that the frequency of the expression was due to a general acquaintance with the source from which it was derived. For the supposition that the writers on both sides employed a phraseology in general use not only does not meet a tithe of the cases, but, as shown above, is absolutely inapplicable; for, in the examples just quoted, the expressions are such as any writer might have used, and the phraseology is of the commonest; and yet the adoption of it at once brings home to the reader’s mind, with absolute certainty, the source from which it is borrowed,

An  
illustration  
of the  
argument.

and thereby carries with it not only its inherent weight and force, but also additional point and attractiveness from the association which it recalls. It acquires, in fact, the character of a purposely adopted idiom, or of proverbial language.

Prophets  
evidently  
acquainted  
with the  
Pentateuch

We have thus shown that there is ample and abundant evidence that the Prophets were acquainted with an earlier literature, which can have been none other than the Pentateuch. Many indications are given of this in the previous pages, but it can readily be supplemented, and may be seen at large in my book, *The Law in the Prophets*. For example, in addition to the instances already mentioned, we have in Isaiah the 'priestly girdle,' the 'tongs' of the sanctuary, the 'cherubim,' and the 'jubilee.' Among the things forbidden in the Law, we have also in Isaiah the 'images,' and 'groves,' the 'seeking to the dead,' 'wizards,' and 'familiar spirits,' the 'taking of bribes,' the 'shedding of innocent blood,' the 'eating of the mouse,' the 'piggul' (abominable things, lxx. 4), and the 'shekez' (abominations, lxxvi. 17). Several of these expressions are well-nigh, if not wholly, peculiar to the Law of Moses as we have it. The natural inference, therefore, is that they point to the existence of that Law, and to the several places where they occur in it. For in a literature like that of the Old Testament, limited in its extent, and wholly without external parallels, the oc

currence of rare words and phrases in different writers points all but conclusively to intentional reference and allusion. For if not, we must presuppose not only a similar and independent system of which we have no traces, but must assume also that the reference is to this, rather than to the one which does exist and does remain.

We have thus gone through the Prophets of the eighth century B.C., with a view to discovering what sort of evidence they bear to the character of the early religion of Israel. Seeing that the function of the Prophets was to rebuke the people for their departure from God, it is manifest that their testimony would rather be to the nation's sins of omission and commission, than in any direct and formal manner to its received religion, which would appear in the main only inferentially, if it could be discovered at all. Moreover, it is desirable to bear in mind what the alternative position would require.

To suppose that the Law as we have it is the outgrowth of 'continuous Mosaic tradition,' extending over many centuries, is contrary to all probability if it was written, and to all possibility if it was unwritten. And to suppose that there was a 'bare nucleus' of genuine Mosaic Law, which was modified and expanded by successive generations of priests, is absolutely fatal to the

Summary of  
this part  
of the  
argument.

Difficulty  
of modern  
theory.



authority of any part of the Law—inasmuch as it is impossible to decide what part was truly Mosaic. And it is evident that the whole is propounded in exactly the same form and manner; and if ‘the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,’ was warranted and true in that which was really Mosaic, it must have been false and surreptitious in that which was later and additional.

### WHAT IS REVELATION ?

Nature of  
revelation.

There seems to be, in many people’s minds, great haziness of idea as to the nature of revelation, and as to the credentials requisite to sustain it. Is revelation, that, viz., of the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, really revelation merely because of its inherent and intrinsic excellence, apart altogether from its authentication; in short, is its inherent excellence, and that alone, its authentication? If so, then manifestly, with regard to the Law of Moses, inasmuch as its inherent and substantive character is that which is convicted of discrepance, contradiction, improbability, and the like, it must on that ground forego any claim to revelation, for its character as such must depend only upon the reality of the mission of Moses.

It is impossible to suppose that many of the laws of the Pentateuch can on their own merits lay claim to being of Divine authority. That

they can claim to be so regarded depends on the authority with which they are given. If Moses spake by the command of God, then on that ground—and on that ground alone—they demand the most respectful consideration, or even more; but if *ex hypothesi* (for an hypothesis it most surely is) they are only in a 'bare nucleus' Mosaic, then we must first decide what that nucleus is, and reject everything else, if only on account of the audacious form in which they appear so often. 'The LORD spake unto Moses, saying . . . I am the LORD.'

Did Moses speak by revelation?

And so again with the Prophets: many of their utterances are of the highest intrinsic merit; many others, it must be confessed, are not so; but in either case they profess to come with a real external and objective authority, which is that and that only of the Prophet's mission. If his mission was not warranted and not real, then there is an end to everything he said, because there was a lie in his right hand. If his mission was real, then that alone gives a weight to his message, which of itself, however sublime and elevated, it could not have.

The objective character of the Prophets' mission.

For instance: many of the sentiments of Milton and Shakespeare are of so lofty and divine a character that in respect of their intrinsic merit they might rank with the utterances of Scripture; but, notwithstanding this, they lack that which Scrip-

Reference to Milton and Shakespeare

ture has or has not—an objective and external authority, on account of the source from which they purport and assume to come. If this is fictitious or deceptive, then it must for that reason rank lower rather than higher than anything that may have been uttered by Milton or Shakespeare.

Can  
revelation  
make good  
its claim?

Now, this lofty, but of necessity somewhat vague and indefinite characteristic, I call revelation. Is it capable of making good its claim or is it not? If it is not, then all that we mean by revelation is that amount of excellence which we choose to assign to it; which must vary as we vary. But if it is, then we must inquire how this exalted claim can be made good; and in the case of Moses, it must be very clear, if indeed the narrative that we have of him is genuine and authentic, that it originates from him personally, and is historically true; the latter is the more essential, because Moses personally may not have written a line of the Pentateuch (except by the agency of others), and yet his narrative may be literally true. The narrative, however, cannot be authentic unless it virtually runs up to the personal authority of Moses. On the other hand, if his narrative is genuine, then it cannot on the assumption fail to be authentic. In that case, then, we have the highest possible authentication of the message delivered by him; which, in fact,

Moses'  
writings  
genuine and  
authentic.

was corroborated by the whole tenor of his marvellous career and work.

And so with the revelation of the Gospel; if the Gospels are authentic, there is the highest probability of their being genuine: if, on the other hand, they are genuine, they can hardly fail to be authentic. But then, what they tell us of Christ is of value, not only on account of its intrinsic excellence, but because it is of Christ. No one, I suppose, would deny that the character of Christ adds enormously to the authority of His words. It is not merely that He spake as never man spake, but that He came as the Son of God, and was what He professed to be. Now, no one can call himself a believer, and not admit that the person of Christ adds infinitely to the authority of His words. Spoken by Him, His words have an authority and a weight which of themselves they would not have. In estimating His words, then, we assign the highest possible authority to Him.

The Gospels  
both  
authentic  
and  
genuine.

It is so analogously with Moses. All that Moses did, if it was done as it professed to be, with the direct authority of God, received its main and inherent authority from the special mission with which he was charged. Though aspersions of doubt might be thrown by some on the wisdom of a great part of the Law, yet if it really came, as it professes to have done, direct from God by

The  
Pentateuch  
of no value  
if of late  
date.

Moses, then that at once invests it with a value and authority it could not otherwise have. Consequently, if the very framework and substance of the Pentateuch is assigned to a later date by many centuries, not only is the assumed authority destroyed, and the stream cut off from its original and Divine source, but the only value the books can have is that of their intrinsic wisdom and excellence, which has already been called in question. On this hypothesis, the work, as we have it, cannot possess the authority of Moses—still less does it possess that of God. And even the very mission of Moses is rendered dubious by the uncertainty as to date which is ascribed to the documents; for if it is alleged that they assumed their present form from floating and unwritten tradition, it stands to reason that this can be worth nothing historically, while it may tax the ingenuity and assurance of the most confident critic to determine what the original tradition was which existed in a *written* form. Thus it becomes absolutely certain that the mission and office of Moses is reduced to the most shadowy and unreal of myths, and is rendered totally unfit to serve as the historic basis of that Gospel which laid claim to be the fulfilment of the whole Law. This is dealing with both the Law and the Gospel in the broadest and most general way, and not claiming for either any more authority than each demands for itself.

But in order to show still further the validity of the position, let us apply the like treatment to the Gospel history.

If on account of the manifold discrepancies in the Gospels we could trust neither one nor any, all that remains to us is the naked character of Christ, as it looms through some of the traditional teaching; but whether He really professed to be the Son of God, and whether He really wrought miracles, must be left a doubtful matter; and, consequently, the whole framework of the Christian faith, as embodied in the Apostles' Creed, is dissipated and destroyed; and the person of Christ is resolved into a hazy and impalpable conception, which is not the solid foundation of the Gospel story, but only the shifting and pulpy nucleus round which, by the accretion of ages, it has gathered and grown. Under these circumstances, what has become of the beautiful and attractive creation known as the Christian Creed, and what has become of the magnificent and majestic edifice known as the Catholic Church?

Apart from the books of Moses, it cannot but be very difficult to imagine what was the early religion of Israel; for there is nothing to guide us, save the testimony of the historical books, every one of which presupposes the Law, and the writings of the Prophets, which, as we have seen, bear very considerable evidence of an acquaint-

Difficult to learn the early religion of Israel except from books of Moses.



ance with the Pentateuch, not only on the part of their writers, but also on that of the people ; and, therefore, in so far as they do this, they prove that the early religion of the people was that of the Mosaic Law.

Whereas, to imagine that the religion of Israel was developed and grew out of that of the surrounding nations—the Baal worship of Canaan and the Calf worship of Egypt and the like—is not only to run counter to every vestige of evidence, but deliberately to put hypothesis in the place of evidence, and to build up an edifice of conjecture thereupon. Nor only so, for surely to any one who believes in revelation, it violates the principle enunciated in the well-known words, ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one!’

Summary.

Is man's  
religion  
Divine or  
human?

In short, let us sum up the whole question. Has man learnt his religion from himself by a process of gradual self-improvement, or has he received it from without by a Divine gift over and beyond, and not seldom in spite of his own efforts and inventions? This is the crux of the problem, and the secret pivot upon which all discussions and investigations concerning early religion must turn: Is it of God, or of man? The modern higher criticism, though professedly conducted on other lines, compels us to determine this initial principle ; for most assuredly, if the

origin of what we have received as the earliest books of the Bible is of no earlier date than the sixth century B.C., then the source of religion embodied in them is of the earth, earthy—and of man, human. Whereas, if the 'Legation of Moses' was a fact, then we have in the books which purport to come from him a veritable and objective revelation, such as that which will alone account for the phenomena of the Prophets and Prophecy of the Old Testament.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE SIXTEEN PROPHETS.

PROPHET'S NAME.	PLACE OF MINISTRY.	DATE B.C. ABOUT	HISTORICAL CONNEXION.
JONAH ....	Israel and Nineveh	850 ....	In the reign of Jehoahaz.
JOEL .....	Judah ....	800 ....	In the reign of Uzziah.
AMOS.....	Israel ....	790 ....	In the reign of Jeroboam II.
HOSEA ....	Israel ....	790-725 .	From the reign of Jeroboam II. to the captivity of the Ten Tribes.
ISAIAH ....	Jerusalem .	760-698 .	From the reign of Uzziah to that of Hezekiah or Manasseh.
MICAH ....	Judah and Israel	750-710 .	In the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.
NAHUM....	Probably Judah	720 ....	In the reign of Hezekiah or Manasseh.
ZEPHANIAH	Judah ....	630 ....	In the reign of Josiah.
JEREMIAH..	Judah and Egypt	628-586 .	From the reign of Josiah until after the commencement of the captivity.
HABAKKUK.	Judah ....	626 ....	Shortly before the captivity.
DANIEL ..	Babylon & Persia	606-534 .	During the whole of the captivity.
OBADIAH ..	Judah or Babylon	585 ....	Shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, or perhaps earlier.
EZEKIEL ..	Chaldea; on the river Chebar	595-572 .	Among the Jewish exiles, before and after the destruction of Jerusalem.
HAGGAI ..	Judah ....	520 .....	} During the rebuilding of the Temple.
ZECHARIAH	Judah ....	520 ....	
MALACHI ..	Judah ....	420 ....	During or shortly after the government of Nehemiah.



PRESENT DAY TRACTS. NO. 79.

# WHO SAY YE THAT I AM?

A QUESTION OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES.

BY THE LATE

REV. H. R. REYNOLDS, D.D.,

*Formerly Principal of Cheshunt College.*




THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

56 PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.



## Memoir of the Author.

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ENRY ROBERT REYNOLDS was born at Romsey, Hampshire, on February 26th, 1825. He was educated at Coward College (the forerunner of New College, St. John's Wood), and at University College, London, where he graduated with distinction in 1844, obtaining the University Scholarship in Mathematics; and later, in 1848, he was elected a Fellow of the College. In 1869 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh. He was only twenty-one years of age when he entered the ministry, being appointed to the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Halstead, in Essex, in 1846. Three years later he accepted a call from the congregation at East Parade, Leeds, in succession to the Rev. John Ely, and for nearly twelve years he laboured most successfully there, his refined pulpit eloquence, his thoughtful teaching, and, above all, the devotion and love that marked his pastorate, winning for him the lifelong affection of the whole of his people. It was his unsparing devotion to his duties that eventually brought his ministry to a close, for the work incidental to so large a pastorate undermined his health, and, to the great regret of his flock and the religious community in that city generally,



he in 1860 resigned his charge. Later in that year he accepted the onerous position of President of the Countess of Huntingdon's College at Cheshunt, and the Professorship of Theology and Exegesis. This institution, founded by that eminent Christian lady, though nominally undenominational, has, in course of time, come to be substantially a Congregational College. Away from the wear and tear of a responsible pastorate in a large town, Dr. Reynolds found himself in a congenial sphere.

It is perhaps impossible to claim on behalf of Dr. Reynolds that he was a great theologian in the realm of constructive theology. He was a man of enormous reading, with the power of wisely using his reading, and of fostering in those whom he taught the same habit. But he possessed in a very rare degree one of the choicest gifts in a theological teacher, the power of enabling his students while under the spell of his voice to *see* spiritual realities. His own spiritual insight and devotional fervour were very marked features. To kneel with him in prayer gave a new meaning to the words faith, life, sin, forgiveness, heaven; and to converse with him was to impress you with the idea that you talked with one who talked with God.

Some years since, could he have been persuaded to accept nomination, he would have been elected with acclamation to the chair of the Congregational Union. Yet, great as the influence was which he wielded through his voice and personality, even greater in all probability was that which he exercised through his pen.

For many years he co-operated with Dr. Allon in editing the *British Quarterly Review*, and for a considerable

period he edited the *Evangelical Magazine*. The list of books written by him is long and varied. It includes four volumes of sermons, *Beginnings of the Divine Life* (1858), *Notes of the Christian Life* (1865), *Light and Peace* (1892), and *Lamps of the Temple* (1895). The last, published by the Tract Society, is marked by all Dr. Reynolds' rare spiritual insight, devotional fervour, and inspiring power. Though intended in the first instance for theological students, it is equally suitable for all Christian workers. He was joint author of the novel entitled *Yes and No; or, Glimpses of the Great Conflict*. His chief theological works were *John the Baptist*, the Congregational Union Lecture for 1874, and *The Philosophy of Prayer* (1882, R.T.S.). His *Athanasius; his Life and Life Work* (1889, R.T.S.), is a most vivid and picturesque sketch of one of the greatest men and most potent periods in the history of Christianity. But by far his greatest work is his *Commentary on St. John's Gospel*. Of this no higher praise can be given than to affirm that it is more than worthy to stand side by side with Westcott and Godet. Indeed, if a choice had to be made, some would not hesitate to say that no book yet issued upon this loftiest of themes has more clearly set forth the meaning and more deeply entered into the spirit and heart of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' Probably this Present Day Tract was the last literary work done by Dr. Reynolds, as he was called away while it was passing through the press, and thus it could not have the benefit of his final revision.

All who met Dr. Reynolds were charmed by his social qualities—the readiness and power with which he told a story, the eager interest with which he listened to a good

story told by another, the charming way in which he would draw upon the treasures of his past experience for the edification and delight of his comrades. Moreover, no man of this century looked out upon men with keener and kindlier eyes. Those who have been much with him know he never suffered more than when against his strongest will he was compelled to admit that some one in whom he felt an interest fell below his own lofty standard of dignity and goodness.

Dr. Reynolds retired from the Principalship of Cheshunt, under the pressure of failing health, in January, 1895. In October, 1895, he lost his wife, one whose fostering care and ceaseless watchfulness and loving helpfulness in all the work of his life he could never too gratefully recognise. In May, 1896, he suffered another heavy bereavement in the death of his brother, to whom he was most tenderly devoted. Yet in the quiet leisure of his Broxbourne home he occupied the hours with busy and useful labour. In April last he filled the chair of the Hertfordshire County Union, and at the Cheshunt College Anniversary, in June, 1896, he discharged his last public duty. The foundation-stone of an enlargement of the College chapel in memory of Henry Allon was laid, and Dr. Reynolds delivered the address. Had this closing action of his long career been his own choice it could not have been happier. After a short illness he passed away on September 10th, 1896, in his seventy-second year.

## Argument of the Tract.



### THE SPECIAL OCCASION AND FORCE OF THIS QUESTION.

#### I. *He was a true Man.*

The true manhood and exalted character of Jesus of Nazareth generally admitted—His unique character referred to.

He was the most real Man of the past. He had in Him a remarkable combination of contrasting features; with universal sympathy and self-abandonment He united the loftiest claims, lowliest duties with highest prerogatives, subtlety with simplicity, self-abandonment with self-consciousness.

#### II. *He was more than Man.*

(i) What He claimed for Himself. (ii) His relation to the moral law. The most holy of men have been the most self-abasing, but Jesus Christ claimed to be sinless. (iii) His treatment of Scripture; with profound deference to the revealed Word, He claimed that *His* word was the infallible voice of the Father. His teaching contrasted with that of the Rabbis. He is greater than the Temple, the Sabbath. (iv) His relation to time and eternity. He not only predicts future events, but foretells that judgment will be assigned by Him. He was with the Father before the world was. Oriental ideas will not account for this. We are led to the conclusion that—

#### III. *He was God incarnate.*

The testimonies of Jesus Christ to Himself. He proclaims a kingdom of which He is Head, and shows how

it is to be established. His personal claim in the Sermon on the Mount. His share in establishing His kingdom a proof that He was more than man. Various claims made in His teaching are discussed. The Early Church considered Him the Lord of Life.

IV. *He is for all ages.*

(i) He belongs to every age. (ii) He is mixed up with our life as it is, and is with us as individuals. He is the Healer of our wounds.

V. *Theology alone can deal with this question.*

It holds the indissoluble union of the Godhead and humanity in Christ. We need the power of God to render thinkable an atom, a cell, a soul, a saved soul, His inspiration of a prophet, but these are nothing beside the thought of the indwelling of the Godhead in and with Christ. God is the indwelling glory of Christ. The Arian, Nestorian, and Monophysite theories considered. Three data which comprise the Christian belief on the subject. Conclusion.

## WHO SAY YE THAT I AM?

*MATTHEW XVI. 15.*



THE moment when this question was put to the twelve Apostles indicated a crisis in the history of our Lord's ministry. His own people at Nazareth

The critical force of the question.

had utterly rejected Him. Even His own family said, 'He is beside Himself,' and would forcibly have restrained His prophetic career. John the Baptist, amid the depression of incarceration, had plaintively asked, 'Art Thou the Coming One, or look we for another?' (Matt. xi. 3). Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, wherein His mighty works were done, had not repented. Some did think He might be 'the Prophet' expected to herald the Messianic advent; others that He was one of the mighty prophets of the great days of old, Elijah, or Isaiah, or Jeremiah (Mark viii. 27, 28). Herod the Sadducee, with the characteristic superstition of unbelief, thought it might be 'John the



Baptist, whom I have beheaded. He is risen from the dead.' The demons knew Him and trembled; and a voice from the excellent glory would shortly declare, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him.' Great deeds had been done, and the mightiest words that were ever uttered by human lips had fallen from His upon the ears of men; and yet even the most susceptible of disciples were not finally convinced in whose presence it was that they stood, or with whom they had to do (Mark ix. 9—13, 30—32). Upon the condition that some at least of these should have caught the transcendent truth, accepted His supreme claims to be 'the Son of the living God,' humanly speaking, the whole meaning of the Incarnation, of the Sacrifice, of the Kingship or Headship of the Christ might have vanished from the minds of His contemporaries. True, the confession of Peter (Matt. xvi. 16) was a thrilling response to His query, 'Who say ye that I am?' but even the man of rock was not prepared for the deeper revelations of the way in which the Christ would have to vindicate His Sonship, and take up His sceptre or ascend His throne. The Lord saw the weakness of the twelve, and had sore experience that their faith was in peril, and that the last agony might be endured by

Peter's  
response.

Himself, and no solitary heart have yet received the message which had come from heaven with Him touching the eternal love and power of the Father; so with sweetness, touching tenderness, and insistence, and immediately before He went into Gethsemane, He asked, '*Do ye now believe?*' It was in answer to the solemn confession, 'Now know we that Thou knowest all things; . . . by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.'

He had still heart-breaking reason to question the strength and endurance of their confession, but He went on to the awful crisis in the conviction that, terrible as the issues of that night would be, He was 'not alone.' He had 'overcome the world.' Humanly speaking, the destiny of the Church, the hope of humanity turned on the genuine but much-hidden conviction, the invincible but yet agitated assent that the eleven gave to the dying Lord's almost passionate appeal, '*Do ye now believe?*' Out of that faith of theirs the world has come, by the power of the Spirit co-operating with their word, to believe and feel the rush of the new life, age after age. At this moment it is still the supreme question that He puts to us all. Upon the response we give to it turns our destiny, and possibly the life of untold thousands.

The faith of  
the eleven.

The historicity of Jesus conceded.

Whatever the criticism of the New Testament books led men to surmise or say in the time of the English Deists, or of the early Rationalists, or even so lately as during the storm and stress of the writings of D. F. Strauss or Ferd. C. Baur, or the author of *Supernatural Religion*, the thinking men of Europe seem settling down to the conclusion that we are all nearer than we ever were before to the historic platform on which Jesus of Nazareth stood ; that we are now morally certain of His true manhood and exalted character; that to compare Him with any other teacher and leader of our race gives Him a very strange and wonderful pre-eminence. He is reported to have said the wisest and most luminous words ever uttered about love and duty, about life and death and what lies beyond, about the rich and the poor, the priests and the people, about the great God and the humblest child, about the wages of sin and the way of blessedness. 'These sayings of His' fall on the ears of all classes with an authority that cannot be impugned, and which have so entered into the very sum of things that they never will pass away. Great empires, notable teachers, kings of men, have vanished one by one, but His thought and words abide like the everlasting stars.

Then the record of His life reveals such

fulness of sympathy with human sorrow and need, such compassion with disease and death, poverty and carefulness, sin and shame, that men can and do tell Him the innermost secret of their hearts more easily than to the most tolerant advocate or most kindly mother or loving wife. Though He said very severe things against all unrighteousness and impurity and selfishness and sin, yet we would all rather face Him than any judge or confessor or minister or friend that could be named to us. 'He knew what was in man,' He was comrade to the most helpless, and yet His silence or His speech could blanch the cheek of the most truculent judge or the most malignant enemy. They found Him 'guilty of too much love,' and they actually crucified Him. One feels, all through that greatest tragedy in the whole history of the world, that His enemies could not have prevailed against Him if He had not granted permission to them to inflict the very worst that falsehood and treachery and malice could invent against Him.

The character  
of the his-  
torical Jesus.

## I. HE WAS A TRUE MAN.

Who was this Jesus? Doubtless He was a thorough man. He was not some phantasm,

The most real  
of all the men  
of the past.

some unreal personage, half fiction and half fact, made up of human hopes and fears. There is common sense in the wide-spread conviction that Jesus was the most veritable historic man in all the past. Generation after generation no one great man has lived and died on our world who has more certainly faced our common destiny than He. He lived the noblest life and died the most cruel death. He ate our bread, He wept our tears, His mother and brethren were known. Old Rabbis came to talk with Him, young rulers knelt for His guidance, weeping women flung themselves at His feet, little children clambered into His arms, the rapacious tax-gatherer and the dying brigand, John the Baptist and Herod Antipas, the Greeks and the centurions, Caiaphas and Pilate, have all left the record of their contact with Him.

His unique  
humanity.

His humanity—the force of His sympathy, the nearness of His life to ours—has become the great commonplace that the human heart will never forego. It has stood many a blow, some aimed by literature or criticism, more by philosophy, and more again by unworthy discipleship; but it has stood all assault. It is a most considerable portion of the Holy Catholic Faith, accepted by all Christians, and at the present day by almost all unbelievers.

I might here call attention to the surpris-

ing combinations of apparent contrasts in the records of His life. No two men are alike. Originality, uniqueness, and at-one-ness characterise every human life, but in His case His many-sidedness has given the feeling and irrepressible sense of the infinite in the manifestation of His sympathy. The way in which He was alive to the thoughts and difficulties, the motives and the madness of others; the penetrating intuition into the meaning of things, into the nature of God and His true character, place Him on higher level than philosophers and prophets. He had such kingly qualities that the Roman proconsul felt He had power and authority which transcended his own; and yet He captured the heart of little children.

The combination of contrasted features in His life.

Every form of diseased humanity sought His aid. Litigants cried for His arbitration, Roman soldiers sought benefits at His hand, and the bereaved and broken-hearted went to Him for solace. Demoniacs felt that He understood their misery. Lepers begged Him to touch their rotting and defiling flesh. Trembling women touched the hem of His garment for healing, and even the blind were so convinced that He could pour light on their sightless eyeballs that they persistently cried for His intervention. Hungry men looked to

He drew all classes to Himself.

Him for food, and a dying brigand on the cross could see imperial glory and power in His last agony. Thus while His sympathy was unmeasurable, though it was along purely human lines, it was so strongly combined with lofty dignity and utter originality that we are presented with a problem which every age has found it difficult, if not impossible, to solve.

The blending  
of universal  
sympathy  
with lofty  
claims;

The sublime and spiritual claims made by Him and for Him, so that some at least held Him to be Messiah, Son of God, Lamb of God, Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, did not prevent Him making a first appearance and enacting the first of His signs (as John calls them) at a wedding feast, and yet there was no incongruity in the combination.

prerogative  
with love;

Again, we might show how He combined superlative prerogatives with the lowliest duties. Almost in the same breath He upbraided the cities wherein His mighty works were wrought because they repented not, and called on the burdened and broken-hearted to come to Him for rest, for His yoke was easy and His burden light.

subtlety and  
simplicity;

Again, we note the keenness and subtlety of His thought, by which He cut through the finest webs of sophistry, and peeled from the current fruit of the tree of life the poisonous excrescences that had disfigured it without dissipating



its virtue. In His greatest discourses He anticipated the perilous use that might be made of His spiritual teaching, and provided remedy and warning, as in Matt. vii. 1—‘Judge not, that ye be not judged,’—advice most probably to be needed by those who had caught the spirit as well as the letter of the previous luminous counsel on the detachment of the mind from sinful over-anxiety. He hunted out insincerity and stripped hypocrisy of its mask, and made the leprosy of impurity and untruth and anger and irreverence stand out on the very face of conventional piety and the sanctimonious profession of traditional orthodoxies. All this, when associated with crystalline simplicity and childlike sweetness and unapproachable tenderness, and fellowship with the most needy and despised of the nation, renders this balance of the powers of His character phenomenally unique.

The self-abandonment of Jesus to the welfare of the unsympathising multitudes around Him became a commonplace for all time. The great supernatural powers—to give them no higher name—which awaited His disposal were never utilised for His own advantage, or even for the temporal success of His own mission. He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father. His entire career from first to last is

self-  
abandonment  
combined  
with

intense self-  
conscious-  
ness.

the dazzling type of self-sacrifice and devotion to the higher life of others. His spontaneity was perfect, and a continuous revelation of the mind and heart and will of His Father. This rose to so high a level that it differed in kind from the intensity of the deliverances alike of conscience and of prophetic vision on the part of the greatest teachers of our race. He appeared in such conscious harmony with the good pleasure of God, that His words and actions were transparent refractions of otherwise inaccessible light. Yet of all men, of all personalities, not one is so personal as He. He was intensely conscious of Himself, and notwithstanding a perpetual forth-streaming of ideas of God as of His Father, He set forth *Himself* as the object of reverence and faith. He never suggested that He was a wave upon the boundless ocean of eternal being. He frequently used the mighty, significant phrase, 'I and Thou.' A voice from the excellent glory said to Him, 'Thou art My beloved Son.' His reply was, 'O righteous Father, I have known Thee;' or, 'Father, I know that Thou hearest Me always;' or, 'Not My will, but Thine be done;' 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' His first word was 'I must be about My Father's business.' His last word, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit,'—indi-

cating most intense self-consciousness in the uttermost abandonment of self.

## II. HE WAS MORE THAN MAN.

Without dropping a single trait of His humanity, the conviction became a deep persuasion that He was, though man, MORE THAN MAN.

MAN, but  
more than  
man.

1. *His claim for Himself.* He certainly claimed for Himself a relation to His immediate followers that was transcendent and unique. Thus 'for My sake' is the grand motive He pressed upon those whom He loved to the uttermost for all their doing of the Father's will. He equated the phrase 'for My sake' with for 'righteousness' sake' (Matt. v. 10, 11). Tender compassion for others was urged on the same ground; even 'the cup of cold water given to disciples to drink *in My name* will not lose its reward' (Mark ix. 41). When seeking to produce the divine yearnings of universal love, 'This is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you' (John xv. 12). He described the final judgment of souls and nations; and the principle of the award was this: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of

What he  
claims for  
Himself.

An unsolved  
problem.

the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me' (Matt. xxv. 40). If these two classes of representation be contemplated together, viz. His self-obliteration towards God and towards man, and His self-assertion towards the Father, towards His disciples and mankind, we have a solemn asseveration of His humanity, and of His being in His inmost consciousness 'more than man.' The second Adam is more than Son of Man. For the most part self-effacement has issued in the extinction of self-assertion; and vehement self-assertion has rendered self-abandonment impossible. Here is a problem which all the records of the ascetic orders fail to solve.

His relation  
to the law.

2. *His relation to the moral law.* Another consideration of parallel importance arises out of His relations to moral law. No great teacher, founder of religion, prophet, or lawgiver propounded a loftier ethical standard of duties towards God or man.

The analogies  
of other  
systems do  
not approxi-  
mate His  
claims.

Doubtless analogies of His great sayings may be found elsewhere. The love of the Lord God and of our neighbour is found in the Book of Deuteronomy; the clean heart is sobbed for by the penitent Psalmist (li.); the active forms of sincerity and philanthropy are urged by the prophets (Isaiah, Micah); and radical reformation of character is contended for in place

of ceremonial cleansing and political change (Jer. vii. 4-7; Micah vi. 6-8). Some of the great teachers of the world—Buddhists, Stoics, Neoplatonists—have at times adopted a similar tone of remonstrance; yet it is not disputed that the ethic of Christ transcends them all. It gathers together the primeval teaching of conscience, the lightning of Sinai, the torchlight of human fear, the gleams of prophetic illumination, into one focal centre, and with tremendous self-assertion it proclaims His person and ministry to be ‘the light of the world’ (John viii. 12).

He pours this light upon the secrets of the heart, upon the seeming innocence of perilous desire, upon the prattle of infancy, upon the garrulous follies of age. Laws and usages that had been made a substitute for eternal right were deflagrated in this more than electric beam; while *quasi*-goodness and righteousness look uncomely and wrinkled and diseased in the dawn of this great day of the Lord. The leprosy and rottenness of human hearts become apparent. No other teacher was ever so trenchant in his exposure of what human nature really is when fairly put beside its ideal. After reading the Sermon on the Mountain, like the leper on the outskirts of the crowd, we are still disposed to cry, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ The standard thus set up will never

The  
humbling  
effect of His  
ideal of life

be taken down. He who knows most of the actual teaching of Jesus is most of all humbled with the sense of utter unworthiness. Words appear to fail them when the great saints tell us what they have felt in the fierce and penetrating flame. Job, David, Ezekiel, Isaiah, lead the way with their strenuous confessions.

upon great  
saints.

These cannot, however, be compared with the experience of St. Paul, with the agonies of Augustine, of Anselm, Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, Bunyan, and thousands of those who have stood in the search-light of the law of Jesus Christ. Whether there was exaggeration or not in the expression of their piety, those who have entered most deeply into the mind and work and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ have been most of all emptied of their self-complacency, and have been the most explicit in their confessions of imperfection and transgression and sin. But how does this great Teacher bear *Himself* in the blaze of His own ideal? According to the analogies of nature and grace, He will be the most self-accusing of all. According to the prophetic forecasts of the perfect man, He will cry, 'I am a worm, and no man' (Psa. xxii. 6); 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up' (Psa. xl. 12). Yet what is the

record? Jesus did not, so far as we know, reveal a quiver of unrest, or the faintest consciousness of sinfulness either of purpose or desire. He claims to be free from every charge that malice can bring against Him. Unlike every other, He needed no penitence, and shuddered under no departure from the holy will of His Father. He knew that He was always doing what was pleasing in His sight. He discriminated Himself from His hearers and disciples whenever the temptation or occasion arose to class Himself as one with them. 'If ye, being evil,' said He (not if we being evil), know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall *your* [not *our*] Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?'

The surprising contrast here between Jesus and His disciples.

In harmony with these words, and when grappling with the deadly animosity of those who were compassing His destruction, He said, 'I am from above, ye are from beneath.' This combination of characteristics compels us to feel that, thorough man as He was, neither the records of grace nor of nature, of history nor imagination, will allow us to rest in the conclusion that He was NOT MORE THAN MAN.

3. *His treatment of Scripture.* Another and similar argument leads us to a corre-

His estimate and treatment of Holy Scripture.



sponding conclusion. I refer to His estimate and judgment of Holy Scripture, by which He was ready to criticise the conduct and life of His hearers, coupled with the power and readiness to give analogous and higher revelations. 'Whoso breaketh one of these least commandments, and teacheth men so, the same is the least in the kingdom of heaven.' When Sadducees scoffed at the resurrection and the immortality of man, He said, 'Ye do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God;' and when Pharisees exhibited their superstitious pedantry, He blamed them for 'making void the law through their traditions.' He condemned all assumption of right to substitute the opinions of doctors of their nation for the prophetic word. Prophetic claims would not justify any infraction of this principle. Yet all this profound deference to Holy Scripture must be taken in connection with the supreme authority with which He commented upon the teaching that they had received. He treated His own word, and expected His hearers to receive, as the instant and infallible voice of the Father. 'He taught with authority, and not as the Scribes.' His 'I say unto you' was put by Him over against the accumulated wisdom of all the teaching which Rabbis had offered, who from generation to

His word the  
infallible  
voice of the  
Father.

generation had been quoting one another for the minute direction of mankind.

They were 'blind leaders of the blind.' But He admitted no error in His own interpretations of the Word of God. He assumed that His own sayings were self-evident—were the very truth of the Most High. He put aside the futile questions of the Scribes, but did not hesitate to solve their problems; *e. g.* to declare which was 'the first and great commandment,' to interpret anew the law of the Sabbath and that of marriage and worship. He fulfilled these amazing functions as one in full and immediate communion with the living God. He did not do this like the ancient prophets, fortifying His words, as they were accustomed to do, with 'Thus saith the Lord;' but He naturally and frankly assumed that the most sacred authorities were not so infallible as 'these sayings of His.' Though 'the wisdom of Solomon' was a commonplace of Jewish self-exaltation, He did not hesitate to say, 'A greater than Solomon is here.'

Contrast  
between the  
teaching of  
Rabbis and  
His.

The Temple of Divine worship at Jerusalem was held in such honour and sanctity, that when Caligula threatened to place his own image in the Holy Place the people threw themselves at the feet of Petronius, and refused to sow their fields or reap their harvests, and by

The Temple.

thousands bared their necks for slaughter, confessing that they were ready to die, but could not endure such indignity. Jesus so far recognised the supreme dignity and sacredness of the Temple as to make both His first and latest public 'signs' vindications of its transcendent claims to reverence; yet He did not hesitate to exclaim, 'The Son of Man is greater than the Temple.' Verily, historic *man* that He was, He was *more than man* in His consciousness, and in the impression that He left behind Him concerning Himself.

The Sabbath.

Again we see that His relation to the Sabbath confirms this conviction. The Lord Jesus did not hesitate to disturb many of its hallowed traditions, and to risk His life in His endeavour to claim a larger and deeper meaning for all its sanctions; but when He declared that He was 'Lord also of the Sabbath day,' He said what was quite as difficult to the faith of His hearers as if He had said, 'I created the heavens and all the host of them by the breath of My mouth.'

His relation  
to time and  
eternity.

4. *His relation to time and eternity.* Another peculiarity of our Lord's consciousness was His relation to *time* and *eternity*. It is true that the sacred histories are full of the memory of mighty men who essayed to draw the veil back from the future. Jesus also

Himself predicted the future of Israel, the future of His disciples, of Jerusalem, and of the human race, and He announced the principles of the final judgment. Here, however, He only did what other prophets had done before Him. It is still left for the evolution of history to prove whether all His words were true. But there is a supreme and transcendent sense in which His prophecies differed from all apocalyptic visions of judgment by other seers. In the Sermon on the Mount, and in His last public discourse, He is perfectly explicit about this: that the destiny of men and nations will actually be assigned by His judgment, and even uttered by His lips (Matt. vi and xxv). The teachings of the fourth Gospel are equally explicit (John v. 27) and tremendous, and yet they have not drawn these assurances of the historic man out of the domain of history. He *is* 'the Judge of quick and dead,' as is confessed by the whole of Christendom, and by the whole of even a divided *Islam* as well. Still the future is future to all finite consciousness save that of Him who is the Eternal. Not even the loftiest intelligence has yet lived 'to-morrow,' or can tell what shall be on the morrow.

He shall  
come to be  
our Judge.

The past does come into human intelligence within certain limits, but the unique peculiarity

His past  
glory with  
the Father.

This consciousness  
not accounted  
for by  
Oriental  
ideas.

of Christ's consciousness was that human birth was not the commencement of the whole of it. He spoke of having come from another sphere, of having descended from above, of having had 'a glory with the Father before the world was.' Abraham desired to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. That His sceptical and wonder-smitten hearers might not misunderstand Him, He boldly said, 'Before Abraham was, I am' (John viii. 55—59). The Oriental idea of metempsychosis throws no light on this and other strange phenomena of the consciousness of Jesus, because the past does not come into consciousness at all. It is only a widely spread and subtle attempt of Pantheism to account for the mystery of sorrow and pain. He gave to the most sympathetic of His followers the irresistible conviction that His human consciousness was lifted up into that of God Himself, that the central essence of it had lain in the bosom of the Eternal, and was the incarnation of the Word. Such extraordinary claims led to angry recriminations: 'He deceiveth the people.' These charges would have been natural and plausible, if at the same time they were not coupled with revelations of moral harmony, of balance of mind, truthfulness, purity, absolute conviction that the more men study His words and His life they say with

one accord, 'If He is not good, there is no such thing as goodness; if He was not sincere, let the idea of sincerity be discarded as a hopeless absurdity and an eternal superstition!'

### III. HE WAS GOD INCARNATE.

We hold, therefore, to His moral unity, to the beauty and harmony of His character as it has come down to us, as the strongest hold we have on the reality of the living God.

I will not here stop to inquire into corresponding beliefs of other nations in the union of God and man, the incarnations of Oriental Pantheism, the practical deification of the great sages and mighty potentates of East and West. The conviction shows the impression which the character and splendour of these personalities made upon mankind.

Oriental beliefs in incarnations.

Nor have we any opportunity here to deal with the preparation made in Holy Scripture for the appearance of such a personage, the prophecy of the Perfect Man, of a Supreme Teacher and Ruler or Saviour of men. A few words may be said of the testimonies of our Jesus Christ to Himself.

The preparation made for such an incarnation.

The plan of Jesus is the unveiling of His own self-consciousness, and the proclamation of a

The plan of Jesus.

His Kingdom  
—how to be  
won.

kingdom of which He was the Head. We have become so accustomed to the stupendous claim that we do not realize as we may the originality of the assumption, and the way He proposed to realize it. Thus He began by saying that the Kingdom for which the ages had waited had come. The marvellous fulgurations of majesty and victory over the enemies of His people were to be realized by moral changes in them. Even this was transcended by the solemn confessions that the King would win His victories by submission to temptation, obloquy, even suffering and death. *The* kingdom was to be a rule over hearts, a transformation by a spiritual force of the relations of men to each other, of the foundations of society, of the entire goal of the human race. He was indifferent to dynastic changes, and though He seemed to wield super-human powers, proceeded to establish an eternal kingdom by lovingly considering the cause of the helpless, the sinful, the poor and degraded. He came to call sinners to repentance, to incorporate Samaritans and publicans, Syrophœnicians and Roman centurions, as well as the lost sheep of Israel in the kingdom. 'The field' over which His royal Word should be sown 'was the world.' The issues of His plans embraced entire humanity. He rejected the methods by which the world would have



enthroned Him; but nevertheless He did not hesitate to imply that He was 'the Bridegroom' of the true kingdom, the Arbiter of the destiny of men, the Son and Representative of the Great King. These paradoxes were the cause of short-lived popularity, the real occasions of His cruel sufferings, the title and accusation on His cross.

The personal claims of the 'Preacher' of the Sermon on the Mount are often forgotten by those who deal with it as the kernel of the entire New Testament, and the antithesis of all theological treatment of His person. He not only poured forth the crystal stream of beatitudes sparkling in the light of His face, but He identified His cause with that of a 'righteousness' which was to exceed that of the most conspicuous religious professors of His day. He quietly assumes that He would doom as well as bless. He separates Himself from all others; He sits verily on the throne of eternity. These ideas are reproduced in the parable of 'the sower,' 'the seed growing secretly,' of 'the tares' and 'the drag-net,' in the parables of the wise and foolish virgins,' and 'the talents,' and the 'wedding feast,' and 'wicked husbandmen,' and 'the judgment of the great day,'—and He clearly anticipated the world-wide diffusion of the kingdom in the parables of 'the mustard

The Preacher  
of the  
'Sermon.'

The parables.

seed' and 'the leaven hidden in the meal.' The idea of M. Renan that the climate of Palestine might have accounted for the originality and uniqueness of the Lord's plan is too absurd, seeing that for thousands of years, with all its heart-throbs and apocalypses and martyrdoms, no other idea of such a *kingdom* was thus conceived and actually achieved on the same local centre or elsewhere.

His share in establishing the kingdom proof that He is more than man.

A beautiful and charming young peasant, as the later Rationalists have conceived Him, did not execute or fulfil the stupendous conception of the kingdom of God, and its central, living Head. To admit that He had anything personally to do with the establishment of this kingdom is to concede that He, the Man of Nazareth, was *more than man*. He actually claims to possess and be conscious of 'life in Himself,' corresponding in this with the consciousness of the Father (John v. 26), to judge the thoughts and assign the destiny of men, and even to raise the dead, to quicken whom He will (John v. 21), to receive equal honour with the Father (John v. 23); to protect His own sheep from all peril, as 'the Good Shepherd,' from whose hands, as from the Father's hand, none would be able to pluck them; for, said He, 'I and My Father are *one*' (John x. 27—30). This was more than oneness of desire and function;

it was equivalent to the assumption of personal power in the spiritual and eternal world. This was resented by the Jews as blasphemy; but He vindicated for Himself a right to use such language because He was infinitely more than those princes of the people to whom the Psalmist had given the name of *elohim*—‘gods’ (Psa. lxxxii. 6; John x. 31 *et seq.*). His entire reply was regarded by His enemies as an aggravation of His offence. Doubtless He did elsewhere speak of His disciples as ‘one’ with Himself and with His Father, but not as wielding omnipotence, or being a match for all the powers of earth and hell. He claims to have ‘descended from heaven.’ His biographer at the close of the prologue declares that He was in the bosom of the Father—the state of absolute knowledge, love, and power; and in converse with Nicodemus the Lord had so brought His heavenly consciousness to earth that He could speak of Himself, of the Son of Man, of being then and there ‘in heaven’ (John iii. 13 *et seq.*). The mysterious fact must have reached the Baptist, or have been the conclusion which the Evangelist drew from the entire revelation, when it is said that ‘He who cometh from above is above all;’ ‘He who cometh from heaven is over all’ (John iii. 31). In John vi. 32—63 we find the Son of Man to

He claims personal power in the spiritual and eternal world.

be the veritable personage who gave Himself to cruel and violent death for the salvation of the world, but who came down from heaven and ascended to where He was before. In John viii. 14, 23, 24, 43, the 'above,' the native sphere to which He belonged, is contrasted with the low, carnal life of His hearers; but the entire phraseology is an assertion of a pre-existing life, and heavenly, Divine nature.

John xvii. 5,  
25, discussed.

Numerous attempts have been made to minimise the astounding weight of the assertions made in John xvii. 5 and 24, touching the glory of the Father in which He dwelt before the foundation of the world. It becomes a grave question whether all that St. John meant to convey of our Lord's inmost thought could have been nothing but the predestination of His own life to be the means of conveying a true idea of the nature of true glory to men; but He here asks that a glory that had been His before the foundation of the world might be given to His human nature, and be admired, adored, and shared by His own. It is in full harmony with this that Jesus spoke (John viii. 58) of His personal existence before Abraham; that when Abraham walked the earth, the patriarch then desired to see on earth the day of the Son of Man; and that since that day had dawned, Abraham had (from

his home in heaven) seen it and rejoiced greatly. This was possible, because He added, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' Difficult as this saying was, misunderstood at the time and since, it must have been one of those wonderful words which dwelt in the mind of the Evangelist when he wrote the 'prologue' to the Gospel, and also penned the opening words of the Epistle.

We couple the 'sayings' of the Lord as given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, with those in the spiritual Gospel, and they are equally explicit. Special reference has been already made to the part that our Lord promised to take in the judgment of quick and dead (Matt. vii. 21—23; xvi. 27; xxiv. 30; xxv.). The superiority of the Lord to the angels who will co-operate in the great assize is plainly asserted (Matt. xiii. 41—49; xvi. 27). Again, the perpetual presence of the Lord with His disciples (Matt. xviii. 20) assumes a personal omnipresence and power to heal, forgive, and bless throughout all time. 'I am in the midst of them'—the two or three gathered in His name—recalls the numerous passages in the Old Testament where these expressions are referred to Jehovah Himself. These mighty words were reaffirmed by the mysterious and wonderful assurance (Matt. xxviii. 18—20) that 'all authority was given to

Our Lord's  
sayings in the  
Gospels.

Him in heaven and upon earth,' and that He Himself would be with His own disciples even to the end of the world. Luke's History of the acts of the risen and glorified Christ is powerful testimony to the fulfilment of the promise, while the entire valedictory discourse (John xiv.—xvii.) is a life-giving preparation. Nor must we forget that both in Matt. xi. 25—30 and Luke x. 21—24 He uttered words of stupendous significance concerning His relation to the Father and to men, not exceeded if they were ever reached by the author of the fourth Gospel: 'All things are delivered to Me of the Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.'

Such consciousness as this is more than human, as attested by the experience of the Church for 1800 years. I do not here and now emphasise the direct testimony of the Apostles to this conviction of theirs; but it lies upon the surface and is written between the lines of the apostolic Epistles, that beyond the simple 'letter' of the New Testament, a widely-spread community undoubtedly held that He was the 'Lord of glory;' that with the Eternal Father and the Ever-blessed Spirit He was the Minister and Mediator of infinite benediction. The Apocalyptic writer had equated the glories and

The early Church considered Him the Lord of Life.

adoration of the Lamb of God with those of the Father (Rev. vii. 11, 12) ; and no greater benediction could He leave as His legacy than ' the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints.' The Conqueror in the great battle-field with evil is none other than ' the Word of God,' and throughout the Revelation the Old Testament phrases indicative of adoration and glory of Jehovah are freely given to the Lord Jesus.

It is interesting to notice that in the four undisputed letters of St. Paul, those to the Corinthians (1 & 2), Galatians, and Romans, the implications of the later Epistles, viz. to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, and even the pastoral Epistles, are abundantly anticipated. The testimony of the Epistle to the Hebrews is perhaps more expressive than any other portion of the New Testament to the perfect humanity, and yet the infinite majesty and glory of the Lord Jesus.

Earlier  
Epistles.

Later  
Epistles.

Epistle to  
Hebrews.

The Apostle Paul undoubtedly prayed to Christ (2 Cor. xii. 8), and regarded invocation of His name as the essence of the Christian life. He regarded Him as the giver of mercies (Phil. iv. 19), as the Person or Being who has absolute right to claim supreme affection and love (1 Cor. xvi. 22—24), and as the proper object of hope and faith (Rom. xv. 11, 12), as having received, as Man exalted and glorified,



‘THE NAME that is above every name’ (Phil. ii. 9—11). I will not attempt now a full treatment of this large subject, nor advert to the language that He received from Thomas unrebuked, ‘My Lord and my God,’ nor refer to the apparent contradictions of this uniform tenor of testimony ; but I purpose to remind my reader of another group of undeniable facts.

#### IV. HE BELONGS TO EVERY AGE.

Chris  
belongs to  
every age.

1. This Man of whom we speak in some mysterious way belongs to every age. He has been ahead of every subsequent generation of men. The old artists had a grotesque way of representing this unique peculiarity ; they used to paint saints, doctors, martyrs of the first, fourth, eighth, and tenth centuries in groups about Him, just as if they were all living at the same hour. This intense humanity of His seems to us even to deliver itself from time, to step off the platform of time, to do and say great things which make and mark Him, while brother of us all, to be yet filling that eternity to which both He and we belong. Whatever has happened in the world, He has been watching its evolution. Whatever changes have occurred in our science, in our politics, in our manners, He has been preparing for them all, and making great events

and small work out His will. In the fall of empires, false prophets, crusades, and revolutions, He has been before and above all things. Something analogous may perhaps be felt in other countries about the founders of other religions; yet the thorough-going comparison of these with Him brings out their ethical inferiority, and the fact that their noblest features have been washed-out parodies of His sun-bright personality.

2. This same Jesus, as a matter of fact, is mixed up inextricably with our own life as it is. He is felt to be operating behind all phenomena; He is at work behind the interaction of all the forces. Humanity is moving to a goal, answering His idea. The future seems, more certainly even than the past, to be in His marshalling. There is an onward progress in humanity, and this progress is not according to the ideal of Confucius or of Cæsar, of Buddha or of Mohammed, of Gregory VII. or of Napoleon; but it is unfolding the kingdom of the Father, who is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ.

Mixed up  
with our own  
life.

But more than this. He is close to each one of us. He is behind every veil; and when we lift the most mystic and bewildering of all, we know that we shall meet Him, to answer for our treatment of Him and await His judgment; verily He is 'more than man.'

Close to each  
of us.

The endeavour to interpret these superhuman, supernatural features leads us into very deep and lofty speculation. Some of us have been in the depth of a Californian forest, some have lain all night on a battle-field, or gazed for hours on successive nights on an Oriental sky. We have felt irresistibly that what we call God, not *Force*, nor *Evolution*, nor mere *Nature*, was at the back of our transcendent impressions. We need the Absolute and Infinite to interpret the deep mystery. So is it for us with the manifested presence of the Lord Jesus.

The perfect  
ideal.

There can only be one 'right and wrong' in the universe. The highest ideal of 'right,' the most gruesome conceptions of 'wrong,' carefully balanced against infinite perfection of moral beauty, have compelled men to admit, after long search, that here is the Divine; and there can be only one perfect ideal.

He is the  
one Healer of  
our wounds.

But what we know of Jesus assures us also that He alone can heal our wounds. The blood of Jesus, the death of Him who has risen from the dead, and has passed through these heavens that He might fill all things, not only takes away the infinite unrest of our sins, and provides the ground of our reconciliation with the Father, but produces a moral effect and a healing force, unlike every other remedy, for our diseases or the arrest of our despair. In the great crises of

soul and life the most extreme physicist feels some appeal to Him become possible. He it is who alone or throughout the generations has given rest to souls.

Truly the full and complete blending of perfect and absolute God with true manhood transcends every supposed incarnation of God, or deification of man, spoken of in history or dreamed of in poetry. Every attempt to think out this union of God and man by practically ignoring either one or the other has ended in the production of an unthinkable personage.

Some of the most noteworthy and recent endeavours to explain all His words and deeds on the principle of a pure and mere humanity, and the ordinary consciousness of our race, even if exalted in His case by supernatural experience of the paternal and filial relation between Himself and God—one into which He urged that all others might enter—do all of them fall immeasurably below the actual place Jesus really fills in human thought. If from one of these frigid and so-called critical judgments of what He was and said, and how He wrote Himself into the heart of the world, we pass to the actual life of the Church, to the fervours of martyrdom, to the quiet pervasive presence in a million homes, to the sanctities of numberless lives and the joy of countless death-beds, to the missionary

He is the true  
blending of  
God and man.

The critical  
estimates of  
the reality of  
the Christ  
fail to ac-  
count for the  
facts.

zeal which, having commenced in the first century, shows no sign of languor or diminution in the close of the nineteenth century; if we escape from the schools of modern criticism to the ample and luxuriant and fragrant developments of Christian thought and worship-song, to the liturgies, ritual, and philosophy, even to the mistakes and corruptions of the Middle Ages, we are irresistibly convinced that the arctic winter was not the cause of the tropical summer, and that the Christ as He figures in the pages of certain modern philosophers could not be even the most imperfect antecedent and explanation of the Christ of Christendom. To suppose the one to be the sufficient germ of the other is to ignore some tremendous facts.

#### V. THEOLOGY ALONE CAN DEAL WITH THIS QUESTION.

How much  
more than  
man?

Christ is 'more than man;' but the question of 'HOW MUCH MORE' can only be partially answered by watching the history of the idea of the conviction as it has been evolved in the conflict of human thought. That history is fashionably voted to be intricate and sterile and depressing, leading only to the rampant strife of the schools and of the churches, the dry dust and chaff of theology, rather than to the

living energies and engrossing enterprise of the religious and Christian life. Now, theology is certainly not religion, but that which answers to theology—some strenuous attempt to think out rationally from first principles a view of God and the universe—is a vital accompaniment of every vigorous form of religion. Moreover, there are very few fragments of great theological systems, however remote their definitions and distinctions may be from the thoughts of to-day, which did not at some period or other stand in close connection with deepest religious experiences and life.

In its answer to the question, How 'much more than man' was and is the Lord Jesus Christ? theology has mainly insisted on holding the two classes of fact, the manifestation of Godhead and humanity, and their indissoluble union with each other, without professing to find any final explanation of the mystery.

A philosophy which has been based on the indwelling of God in the work of His hands has greatly lightened the burden of thought. God the eternal, the absolute, is not at an infinite distance above us. On the contrary, nothing but the infinite power, capacity, and resources of God can enable one to bear even the thinking out of the behaviour of a solitary *atom*.

More and more of Divine omnipotence and

Theology can alone deal with the question, 'How much more than man?'

We need Divine capacity to render thinkable—

an atom—

a cell— wisdom are needed for us, if we try to realise the development of a solitary germ or cell of *life*.

a soul— Again, the entire career of every *soul* of man demands more and more of Divine personality and righteousness and goodness. 'For in Him we live, move, and have our being.' The effort of any human being to come into conscious accord with the Divine idea makes us aware of the continuous operation of Divine grace to rectify and subdue the human perversion of the ideal of its own perfection.

a saved soul. Further revelation and inspiration in the life and life-work of the *prophets of God* flash out more and more upon our ignorance, the nature and reality of the Divine fulness, also the fact and intensity of His indwelling in the creatures of His power, wisdom, holiness, and goodness.

How much more the dwelling of the Godhead in Christ! And yet these all sink into insignificance beside the indwelling of the God-head with and in JESUS CHRIST. The greatest men of the renowned race of kings and prophets who had taught mankind are one by one less than He, and had fundamentally less to teach than He. As we have seen, even the Temple and the Sabbath, those pregnant symbols of the Divine presence, would change their form in face of His revelations of Himself. He spoke often of His life as a conscious mission into this world, and of a glory that He had with



His Father before all worlds, so that the Divine, indwelling with and in His humanity, took possession of His consciousness. Nor only so, but the willing sacrificial surrender of His earthly life became, in His teaching, the guarantee of the forgiving grace of God; and He assumed the prerogative of exercising control of human souls and their destinies, implying a loftiness of justice and an amplitude of sympathy, with a sufficiency of knowledge and an adequacy of power correspondent with all the needs of every heart.

The transcendent significance of the indwelling of God in Christ.

Such Divine energy as this would rival the very throne of the eternal God, all the going forth of a Father's heart, and all the answer to it of the eternal Son, unless, unless it be the Divine fulness of both—unless this human life of His in which it was manifested were the seat and shrine, the organ and image of the Divine Being.

His human life the shrine of the Godhead.

There cannot be two Gods in a rational theology, one human and one Divine, one physical and one spiritual.

The unity of God compels us to believe in the supreme fulness of the Godhead in the Divinity of the Christ.

If He be thus wielding superhuman powers, they must be the highest of them all. It is beyond our mental capacities to think two

The Lord  
God the  
indwelling  
glory of  
Christ.

realities underlying all appearances, two highest, two, still less three, or any greater number of *foundations* of all things. The Lord God, nothing less than Himself, is the indwelling glory of the Christ, the Person who speaks to us through the personality of Jesus.

The Arian  
theory.

Many attempts have been made by early and later critics to suppose that some energy of the Godhead less than Himself, created in time, variously occupied with the affairs of the world or the salvation of man, was all that was manifested in the Lord Jesus. The Christian consciousness refused the hypothesis, being persuaded that it would have brought back into Christendom the Polytheism that had been so painfully driven out. It is a foolish mistake that the contest of the third and fourth centuries was a fierce philosophical difference over the presence or absence of a single letter 'i' altering a word meaning 'of the same substance,' into 'of a similar substance.' It is easy to caricature a vital distinction. The question that really divided men and women, provinces and nations, was whether the Divine Intelligence and Will, which manifested itself in the Christ, was the eternal and only God, the Son of God, of one substance with the Father, or merely some *quasi*-power, which was far more like the pantheistic paganism that had,

by the heroism of generations of martyrs, been expelled from the schools of thought.

The next great absorbing question was, Were God and man absolutely united in the Christ, or were they merely attached to one another by a loose and vanishing chain? The latter hypothesis, popular as it was, and speciously pressed even to-day, left the humanity of Christ untouched, but deprived Him of all power to save or deliver the soul from sin or death.

The  
Nestorian  
theory.

A third immense question arose out of the second. Might not—urged the sceptics of the fourth and fifth centuries—the entire difficulty be solved by concluding that the God-man had but ONE nature, neither absolutely Divine nor perfectly human? No, said the Christian consciousness. In that way there is a Christ who cannot be touched by the feeling of our infirmities, who is not strong enough to bottom our need, or to reconcile us to Himself, or to save us from crushing fears and awful peril.

The  
Monophysite  
theory.

After all, if we accept, as we should and may, (a) the historic Jesus, the perfect humanity of our Lord, (b) the unity of the eternal and glorious God, and (c) the oneness of the Christ, we shall come very nearly to the position which embraces the best that theology, that philosophy, that common sense, and that Christian experience bear witness concerning Him.

The three  
data of the  
Christian  
faith.

Conclusion.

Doubtless the Eternal Word, Wisdom, Image, Son of God, is represented as anticipating the Incarnation. He who was from the beginning, who was with God, and who was and is God Himself, who was in the world, who made the world, and upholds it by the word of His power, gave many prelibations of what He would ultimately do and suffer and reveal of the Father's glory, when He should take our human nature into full and final union with Himself. It is neither Roman Catholic nor Lutheran, Anglican nor Puritan theology which transforms the humanity of Jesus into the Eternal God, or compresses all the fulness of the infinite into the finite dimensions of the life of Jesus of Nazareth; but it is the wide-spread and overwhelming conviction of Christians that the Divine and human are so blended in the Christ, brought into such living, perfect union, that we have in Him power which is universal and resistless, goodness and blessedness to which there is no parallel, judgment from which there is no appeal, and the Divine Reality which is within and behind all things, that of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things.

# SOME MODERN VIEWS OF ZOROASTRIANISM

EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE  
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RECTOR OF INGWORTH, NORFOLK;

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‘HEREDITY AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY;’ ‘MODERN SCEPTICISM  
COMPARED WITH CHRISTIAN FAITH;’ ‘SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY;’  
ETC., ETC.



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:  
56 PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

## Argument of the Tract.

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THE Tract states the views put forward by the author of 'The Modern Zoroastrian.' It states the grounds on which his theory and that of other modern writers of the same school is based; how and why it is identified with a form of Christianity emptied of its supernatural elements so as to adapt it to the requirements of modern science; and thus resolves itself into a system of naturalistic theism, in which modern thought and the ancient philosophy of Zoroaster are supposed to coincide, both accepting the dualism or co-existence of good and evil 'as a necessary law of existence.' The Tract points out the course of reasoning here adopted in dwelling on the ignorance of man and his insignificance in the universe, with a view to dispel the 'illusions' of the old faith in favour of the 'creed of science,' and shows that this is an undertaking unwarranted in the present state of science, and that its conclusions are premature. After some preliminary remarks on the admitted incompleteness of the knowledge of natural phenomena and the incompetency of science to solve the last problems of life and mind, and the consequent inconsistency of accepting scientific dogmas, still *sub judice*, whilst rejecting the doctrines of Christianity on scientific grounds, the Tract proceeds to examine the answers given by this theory to the three questions (1) Whence are we? (2) Why are we here? (3) What becomes of us hereafter? It points out, quoting the independent but converging testimony of impartial modern writers of note, that these answers fail to satisfy the mind and conscience of men in the present day, and that a reaction is therefore setting in in favour of religion, because it has a better answer to give than that of science. The Tract then shows by way of contrast how, viewed from the Christian standpoint, (1) the course of human history, (2) the ground of man's duty, and (3) the mystery which gathers round his future destiny, receive a fuller and more consoling meaning. In conclusion the Tract sums up the argument, showing that a *quasi*-scientific system which takes refuge in nescience, in dealing with the deeper problems of life and mind, tends to retard intellectual progress; that a denial of the supernatural and the claims of faith by the side of partially ascertained facts in the natural world, is inconsistent with the methods of scientific verification, excluding as it does a whole class of spiritual phenomena. It shows that by defining its proper sphere for each a reconciliation may be effected, in which the heart and the head may be satisfied, science supplying the criteria of knowledge, and religion supplying the key to the mystery which lies behind natural phenomena; and that such a provisional unification would add strength to human effort, elevation to human hope, and a greater completeness to human life.

# SOME MODERN VIEWS OF ZOROASTRIANISM

EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY.



AMONG the numerous substitutes for the faith of Christ suggested in the present day is that of 'a Modern Zoroastrian.'<sup>1</sup> Not only the modern pessimist and mystic, but also the scientific optimist and philosopher, are seen turning to the East for a religion to supply the place from which they have banished Christianity, as no longer able to satisfy the spirit of the age. Thus Mr. Laing, to whom reference has been made already in the Tract on Scepticism,<sup>2</sup> in the book here referred to propounds more or less seriously the leading doctrines of this 'excellent 'religion,' chiefly recommended on the ground of its simplicity and the ease with which it may be assimilated to our scientific modes of

*A Modern Zoroastrian*, by S. Laing. The quotations in this Tract are from the 6th thousand, London, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> See Tract No. 69 of this series, pp. 21—23, 44, 60.



thought. His chief aim is to adapt this ancient religion for modern use; and in the process much is left out and much read into the system by its exponent, so that the old Zoroastrianism is often different from the new.

### ELEMENTS OF ZOROASTRIAN SYSTEM.

It is an  
agnostic  
system.

1. Following the lines of our most recent exponents of science and the now fashionable synthetic philosophy, according to Mr. Laing it relegates the Divine Being 'much further back 'into the vague and infinite than the God of 'any other monotheistic religion. . . . He is, 'in fact, not unlike the inscrutable First Cause 'whom we may regard with awe and reverence, 'with love and hope, but whom we cannot pre- 'tend to define or to understand.'<sup>1</sup> On this point Zoroaster and Herbert Spencer agree, —that we *know nothing and can know nothing* of the Absolute behind Nature.

It limits the  
Divine  
power.

2. Again, the essential difference between Zoroastrianism and any other religion, we are told, is its conception of God—Ahura Mazda, generally written Ormuzd—as *limited in power*. He is not omnipotent, but 'a Being acting 'by certain fixed laws; one of which was, for 'reasons totally inscrutable to us, that exist- 'ence implied polarity'—*i. e.* the extreme poles

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 201, 202.

of good and evil are as essential to our moral, as the positive and negative poles of magnetism are to our natural, existence,—‘and therefore ‘that there could be no good without corresponding evil.’<sup>1</sup> Here we have a striking coincidence between the reasoning on the limitation of the Divine power adopted by J. S. Mill in his *Essays on Religion* and the teaching of the Eastern sage.

Polarity  
a necessary  
law.

An attempt is even made to point out a way in which the teaching of Christ may be brought into harmony with that of Zoroaster. Only ‘admit,’ says Mr. Laing, ‘that Christ ‘is the best personification of the good ‘principle in the inscrutable Divine polarity of ‘existence, and a man may be at the same time ‘a Christian and a Zoroastrian.’ By making a clean sweep of all miracles, and of metaphysical and mystical conceptions of Christianity, he thinks, we may yet save what is best in it as a religious system which admittedly inspires high morality.

Attempt to  
bring  
Zoroastrian-  
ism into  
line with  
Christianity.

3. In order to give a practical illustration of the great merits of Zoroastrianism as a *moral force*, he argues that the Parsees, who prefer it and are guided by its precepts, are far superior to any other Oriental people; they take rank with the most civilised nations of Europe

Moral  
results of  
Zoroastrian-  
ism—the  
Parsees.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

in this respect, and exhibit, as one of their chief characteristics, philanthropy and public spirit. Therefore, though, owing to some peculiar rites attaching to their creed, a general conversion of the Western nations to Zoroastrianism may not be probable, yet 'the gradual transformation of existing modes of religious and secular thought into something which is, in principle, very closely akin to the "excellent religion" taught by the Bactrian prophet' is far from being impossible.<sup>1</sup>

He proceeds to state that, whilst we are not at all likely to turn Zoroastrians, 'we may envy some of the results of a creed which inculcates worship of the good, the pure, and the beautiful in the concerns of daily life, as well as in the abstract regions of theological and philosophical speculation.'<sup>2</sup> In a similar way Professor Haeckel, in his *Confession of Faith by a Man of Science*, referring to the same Zoroastrian religion, tells us that the 'Amphitheism (= 'Two Divine Principles system), which believes a God and Devil alike, is much more compatible with a rational explanation of the world than pure Monotheism. The purest form of this is perhaps the Amphitheism of the Zend religion of Persia, which

Haeckel,  
creed of  
Science.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 201-204, 208.

<sup>2</sup> Loc. cit., pp. 214-218.

‘Zoroaster (or Zara Thustra, the “golden star”) founded 2000 years before Christ.’<sup>1</sup>

4. It is here, then, that Haeckel, the scientific specialist, and Laing, the populariser of science in relation to modern thought, have found, as they imagine, a religious system in which may be *reconciled the conflict between Faith and Science*. In Ahura Mazda, the great unknown First Cause, who comprehends within himself the two principles of good and evil<sup>2</sup> ‘as a necessary law of existence,’ the believer in Zoroastrianism and the confessor of the creed of Science, hope ‘that evil and good will ultimately be ‘reconciled.’<sup>3</sup>

Zoroastrianism claims to reconcile Faith and Science.

From another source Zoroastrianism is also held up as an ideal for our modern aspirations. Nietzsche, the well-known pessimistic philosopher, in his *Also sprach Zarathustra* (‘thus spake ‘Zoroaster’), makes the Eastern sage utter these words : ‘I teach you how man may surpass himself. . . I adjure you, brothers, remain true ‘to the earth, and pay no regard to those who

Nietzsche as the mouthpiece of Zoroaster, with regard to the highest good.

<sup>1</sup> *Monism, as connecting Religion and Science, the Confession of Faith of a Man of Science*, by Ernst Haeckel, London, 1894, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> *I. e.* According to Laing, who quotes Haug, though other competent scholars represent Ahura Mazda as the Creator of Good only : see *The Parsi Religion*, by John Wilson, D.D., Bombay, 1843, p. 107, 341 ; but there is much obscurity and contradiction on the subject : see Tract No. 29 of this series, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, pp. 202, 203.

‘raise supermundane hopes. . . . For what is  
 ‘the highest good that we can attain to? It is  
 ‘reached in the moment of noblest self-abhor-  
 ‘rence, the moment in which your own happiness  
 ‘becomes a subject of loathing, as also your own  
 ‘reason and virtue. . . . What is great in  
 ‘man is his being a connecting link, not the last  
 ‘link of the chain; what renders him lovable is  
 ‘the fact that his existence is only transitional;  
 ‘that he is destined to be submerged, *i. e.* obli-  
 ‘terated’ (*Also Sprach Zarthrustra*, p. 9).

5. Thus Zoroastrianism exercises a strong attraction for all those minds which embrace naturalistic Theism in one form or another. The main thesis of such is the *comparative insignificance of man’s life*, his littleness and relative unimportance in this vast universe with its immensities of space and time. To bring this home to the minds of his readers, Mr. Laing dwells on those facts ascertained by modern science which are most calculated to bring out this idea,—such, for example, as that in the world of atoms, molecules, and light waves the standard measurement becomes minimised into the  $\frac{1}{250000000000}$  of an inch, whilst a cube whose side is between one-third and one-half of an inch contains

21,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

molecules; also that in the stellar regions

Zoroastrian-  
ism insists  
on the in-  
significance  
of man,

stars of the first magnitude are no less than

20,000,000,000,000

miles distant from us, while 2000 years are required for the light of stars of the eighteenth magnitude to reach our earth.<sup>1</sup> How physically insignificant, then, appears man in comparison with the infinitely little and the infinitely great which surround and embrace him !

6. Another inference, drawn from the lessons of modern science, is *man's profound ignorance* as soon as he quits the region of science based on fact, and tries to enter into the essence of things, and the fact that in the realm of metaphysics he finds himself 'in wandering mazes lost.' In vain he tries to grapple with the mysteries of ubiquitous matter, or to understand the real nature of light and sound, which travel with marvellous speed through undulating ether. But, in curious contradiction to this avowal of human ignorance, we are told that, though we cannot know the nature of matter and force, we *do know* that neither of them can be created nor destroyed, but that they can only be transformed ; and also 'that given the original 'atoms and energies with their original qualities, everything else follows in regular and

and on man's  
ignorance.

Nescience  
and  
knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, 15th thousand, 1893, pp. 10—13, 62.

‘inevitable succession;’ in fact, it is said that ‘the whole material universe is a clock, so perfectly constructed from the beginning as to require no outside interference during the time it has to run to keep it going with absolute correctness.’<sup>1</sup> But to try to know anything of Him who has set the mechanism agoing, or to imagine that it has been put in motion chiefly for the sake of man, is, we are told, presumptuous, so that though it is of the utmost consequence to study the details of the machinery, it is quite beyond our power to know, or to ascertain from whom or by whom all things exist. Moreover, life in its essence is only a state of matter in constant flux, it is the product of evolution, acting according to definite law, and ‘the affirmation of law is the negation of miracle.’<sup>2</sup> Thus the supernatural is rigidly excluded, and for the present we are to be content to remain in ignorance about the origin of life, and to regard it ‘as one of the mysteries not yet brought within the domain of law.’<sup>3</sup> Nor is this, we are told, a matter of urgency, for neither the origin of man’s life nor his final destiny is of such great importance as simple believers before the scientific era have been led to suppose. If we ask, What then becomes of all human aspirations?

Nature’s  
laws and  
the super-  
natural.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 98.



we are told that the only answer to such questions is that 'truth is truth, and fact is fact, 'and that it is always better to act and to believe 'in conformity with truth and fact, than to indulge in illusions.'<sup>1</sup>

7. Here we may ask: Do those who say this act on it in all practical concerns of life? We feel inclined to ask before proceeding further, though with no intention of prejudging the matter: *Are the facts so certain* as to entitle the writer to form opinions and to express conclusions of such far-reaching importance? Mr. Laing himself hesitates at times; *e. g.* after a lengthy discussion of the antiquity of man, he says that until the origin of man is placed on a basis of scientific certainty, 'an opening is left for the belief that 'here, if nowhere else, there was some supernatural interference with the laws of Nature.'<sup>2</sup>

Practical  
uncertainties

We readily acknowledge the fairness of stating the difficulty from the scientific standpoint, and thus leaving ample room for religious speculation; yet we cannot help wondering why it is that on scientific principles such and similar problems should not have been left undecided until the full proof should be forthcoming, why such strong expressions of a bias in favour of a negative creed should be allowed to escape the writer, and why a tone should be adopted in

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 103, 104.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

'Gospel of  
modern  
thought.'

treating the subject which is so calculated to undermine the simple faith of the unscientific, who have no means of ascertaining for themselves how much or how little is left in doubt from a mere perusal of popular manuals. Such people cannot be supposed to have that mental discipline which enables the real student of science to suspend his judgment till the evidence is clear and irreversible in favour of this theory or that. Granted that modern science has brought to light some difficulties of belief, the 'gospel of 'modern thought,' as characterised by Mr. Laing in the following passage, by no means compels unreserved assent :

'On the one hand, the discoveries of science have so far 'established the universality of law as to make it impossible for 'sincere men to retain the faith of their ancestors in dogmas 'and miracles ; on the other, larger views of men and of history 'have shown that religious sentiment is an essential element of 'human nature, and that many of our best feelings, such as 'love, hope, conscience, and reverence, will always seek to find 'reflections of themselves in the unseen world. Hence faith has 'diminished and charity increased. Fewer believe old creeds, 'and those who do, believe more faintly ; while fewer denounce 'them, and are insensible to the good they have done in the past 'and the truth and beauty of the essential ideas that underlie 'them.'<sup>1</sup>

Restoration  
of belief.

There are many sincere men of science who still believe in miracles, and the vicissitudes of faith here described are by no means peculiar to

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, pp. 215, 216.

the scientific age. From which it would appear that a verdict is here pronounced whilst the evidence is yet incomplete. We are not in the possession of all the facts, to make good the negative assertion; and though for the time being faith in the supernatural may have been shaken in some quarters, and modern scientific theories may have added to the difficulties of belief in a God at once all-powerful and all-good, yet it does not follow from this that a wider and larger view of the laws of the universe may not ultimately help in removing these difficulties.

Still less are we persuaded by our author A dilemma. when he tells us that the only alternative is either to 'accept the theory of a God who is 'half good, half evil, or to adopt the Zoroastrian 'conception of a universe contested by an 'Ormuzd and Ahriman—a good and an evil 'principle—whose power is, for the present at 'any rate, equally balanced.' Nor do we escape this dilemma if we 'adopt frankly the scientific 'idea of a First Cause, inscrutable and past finding out, and of a Universe whose laws we can 'trace, but of whose real essence we know 'nothing, and can only suspect or *faintly* 'discern a fundamental law, which *may* make 'the polarity of good and evil a necessary condition of existence.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 222, *ante*.

What is  
gained by  
accepting  
the new  
teaching?

8. A faint scientific perception of a possible law which may (or may not) be the fundamental condition of existence has *no advantage* over a faint faith, which the author acknowledges we cannot help adhering to by the very law of our being. To call this perception of a possible law 'a more sublime as well as a more rational 'belief' is simply stating a preference without logical proof; and the Christian believer has a prior right for preferring his own creed, and saying, 'The old is better.' But even supposing all that is known of Christianity, excepting its excellent code of ethics, were surrendered, so as to 'revert to its more 'simple and spiritual ancestral type,' what in that case could remain of faith in God or in a future state of existence? Mr. Laing says unflinchingly, '*Very little.*' From this it would appear that by a cautious and polite disavowal of 'the highest and most consolatory belief,' such as he recommends, and by a somewhat hasty adoption of the creed of science, which rests on a foundation shown to be equally insecure and indefinite, we lose nearly all, while we gain nothing. In fact, the latter adds to the difficulties surrounding the former. For science has none of the consolations of religion, and appears 'cold and cheerless' to those who embrace it. 'With a polar theory of existence,

*Answer :*  
Very little.

‘the difficulty is relegated to the realm of the ‘unknown.’<sup>1</sup> This is enough for our cheerful philosopher, and he readily resigns himself to do his duty in life with manly fortitude, spite of the darkness which surrounds him, refusing to cross the threshold leading to the ‘realm of ‘the unknown.’

A deep reverence for the mystery of existence is a very becoming attitude for scientific explorers. The legend of ancient Egypt, according to which the young man who tried to lift the veil in the Temple of the Sais was struck down dead for his temerity, has its lesson for the objector of the present day. But this reluctance to lift the veil of Maya has its root elsewhere. It is not with ‘the modesty of fearful ‘duty’ that our scientist follows at all times the Divine indications which may aid him in unravelling the scattered hints given in Nature for this purpose, or in gathering up the threads through the labyrinth by means of which more humble travellers find a clue to the Most High. On the contrary, he flatly asserts that no such clues exist, and that it is of no use trying to find them out. To rush into the temple of Nature, as Pompey rushed into the Holy of Holies, with irreverent curiosity, to see what

True and  
false  
reverence.

Scientific  
ignorance  
no plea for  
stopping  
further  
inquiry.

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of the Future*, by the same Author, thirteenth thousand, 1894, p. 226; and see *ante*, 222, and *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, pp. 289, 290.

was there, is unbecoming in the scientific explorer of her secrets. But does it not savour of presumption to take for granted that by observation and experiment we can exhaust all that is to be known of the visible universe, and that we cannot possibly obtain a glimpse of the Power behind the veil? Is it not presumption to go a step further still, and deny that there ever was given or will be given an explanation of its meaning?

Agnostic  
dogmatism.

It is acknowledged that we are far from being in possession of all the facts which may be reported by sensation and reflection, and are left in doubt whether their reports are scientifically exact, since 'the ultimate scientific ideas,' such as matter and motion, time and space, energy and force, involve contradictions which cannot be solved, incoherences which cannot be harmonised, and obscurities which cannot be penetrated. What right have we, then, to pronounce finally at this stage of scientific knowledge as to what may or may not be known? If it be right to go on studying Nature without being baffled by the existence of mystery, why should we not be allowed to go beyond, impelled to it, as we are, by a law of our mind in search of the 'deep 'things of God'? On what grounds should we be forbidden to engage in these speculations on the higher mysteries of being which we cannot,

even if we would, abandon, though baffled over and over again in the attempt? Before, then, we proceed any further with the argument, it must be pointed out, *in limine*, that

# SCIENCE CONFESSES ITS OWN LIMITATIONS.

By the admission of its most distinguished exponents, science and modern thought do not profess to be able to give us a complete account of natural phenomena, nor, such as they are, do they further the resolution of problems concerning man's place in the universe. This appears from the title and contents of Mr. Laing's book on the *Problems of the Future*. These are described in the Introduction as partly scientific and partly religious, social, and political questions, 'which are looming on the horizon, and engaging the attention of thinking men.' But we are told that they are *problems*, the solution of which, indeed, must depend on natural laws; but which are still 'pebbles which have not yet been picked up on the shore of the 'ocean of truth.'<sup>1</sup> On such an important subject, for example, as man's origin and antiquity we are told, 'The attitude of the scientific world must be described as one of eager expectation rather than of assured knowledge; and 'this most important and interesting of all pro-

Incomplete-  
ness of  
science.

Problems,  
not solutions.

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of the Future*, pp. 4, 32, 64.



Science  
cannot show  
the relation  
of mind and  
matter.

‘blems must be relegated amongst the problems ‘of the future.’<sup>1</sup> If in one place it is asserted that the phenomena of mind and spirit ‘are indissolubly associated with mechanical movements ‘of the material elements of nerve-cells;’<sup>2</sup> in another there is an equally explicit statement that, in the case of the truth of mental impressions, we must rather assume them to be real than boast of perfect assurance.<sup>3</sup> Again, in those chapters of the work on *Modern Science and Modern Thought* which treat of matter and mind and their mutual relation, the inability of science to solve the problem is fully admitted. ‘If we ask how came the atoms into existence, ‘endowed with this marvellous energy, we have ‘reached the furthest boundary of human knowledge, and can only reply, in the words of the ‘poet, “Behind the veil, behind the veil”’ (p. 70). If we are told that man originates in a ‘minute ‘or embryo cell,’ and ask further, but whence came the aboriginal cell itself? *i. e.* ‘if we try ‘to go a step further behind the cell, we are ‘stopped’ (p. 84); and again, ‘As regards the ‘first origin of life, science fails us, and there is ‘at present no known law that will account for ‘it’ (p. 86).

In short, Mr. Laing comes to the same con-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 176, 177.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 188, 189.

clusion as Lord Salisbury, in his presidential address to the British Association, that we 'live in a small, bright oasis of knowledge, 'surrounded on all sides by a vast, unexplored 'region of impenetrable mystery.'<sup>1</sup>

Lord Salisbury on limitation of knowledge.

Nor are leading scientific specialists less explicit in their 'survey of our ignorance.' Thus, E. Haeckel, in his *Confession of Faith of a Man of Science*, admits that we are by no means in a position to form a satisfactory conception of the exact nature of atoms, though all phenomena are said to carry us back to 'the mechanism of the atom' and their movement in space, which cannot be understood without postulating the existence of an 'in-scrutable ether.' In reference to this and other 'fundamental questions,' he is obliged to say, with his opponent, Emil du Bois-Reymond, and with his friend the late Professor Huxley, that for a long time to come we must content ourselves with an '*Ignoramus*' ('we know not'), if not even with an '*Ignorabimus*' ('we shall 'not know').<sup>2</sup>

Confessions of scientific thinkers.

Thus, so far from affording us a solution of the deepest problems, modern science, by its own confession, becomes rather the

<sup>1</sup> *Times*, August 9, 1894.

<sup>2</sup> *Confession of Faith*, pp. 19, 29, 30. Here we are dealing with scientific articles of faith.

Nescience and materialism.

‘solvent of knowledge.’ But this form of materialism, wearing the visor of Nescience, is none the less dogmatic in its profession of a negative creed of science.

It leads to  
philosophical  
indifference.

At other times, whilst professing sceptical reticence and suspense, it really amounts to Pyrrhonic negation, forgetting that ‘the only ‘adequate expression of nescience and suspense ‘is silence.’<sup>1</sup> In the case of Mr. Laing himself it assumes the attitude of mental imperturbability, or even philosophical indifference. ‘I ‘gaze with straining eyes into the Unknowable, ‘and gaze in vain. . . I can only say with ‘Tennyson—

“ Behold ! I know not anything,”

‘and content myself with the only creed which ‘seems to me certain, that of trying to do some ‘little good in my generation, and leave the world ‘better rather than a little worse for my individual unit of existence.’<sup>2</sup> Such is the cheerful composure of a believer in scientific doctrines still *sub judice* ; and he expresses an equally cheerful readiness to renounce religious beliefs on negative evidence of a no less uncertain character, forgetting what he says elsewhere that ‘ignorance is not evidence.’ It is a severe strain on our credulity and incredulity

Acting on  
doubtful  
evidence.

<sup>1</sup> John Owen, *Evenings with the Skeptics*, vol. i, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> *Problems of the Future*, p. 49.

respectively, on the one hand, to accept the dogmas of scientific scepticism acknowledged to be still in a great measure matters of faith, and on the other to relinquish on equally doubtful evidence religious beliefs; the more so since Mr. Laing admits that the 'highest and most consoling beliefs of the human mind are to a great extent bound up with the Christian religion.'

Why not wait a little longer, till the assumptions of science are more clearly proved or disproved, and the credentials of Divine revelation have been more fully discussed?

Since the *credenda* of science are still in a measure lost in 'the mythical past,' waiting for further elucidation and proof, why should we not continue to 'walk by faith and not by sight' in matters of religion, especially as men of science themselves assure us that in our present state 'we know nothing of what may be beyond phenomena?' Seeing the tremendous importance of the issue at stake, a cautious reticence is surely preferable to a hasty new departure. In science and theology the maxim holds good, 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' To find the completeness of content in a profession of ignorance as to the nature and constitution of the universe is not consistent with an ardent love for truth, and is opposed

What is  
required is  
devout  
suspense.

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, p. 289, *et seq.*

to the inquiring tendencies of a scientific age, and if persisted in it would prove fatal to intellectual progress. 'It is but natural,' as Dr. Martineau severely puts the case, 'that the pretensions of men to more knowledge than they can substantiate should lead to the reaction into imaginary ignorance;' but it is equally true, as he goes on to say, that we 'cannot eventually be content to gaze into an abyss without reply.'<sup>1</sup>

The main questions.

Premising thus much, we may in the next place examine more minutely the three questions—

1. Whence are we?
2. Why are we here?
3. What becomes of us hereafter?

In other words, (1) the origin of man, (2) his present place in the universe, (3) his future destiny according to the teaching of our modern Zoroastrian.

## MODERN ZOROASTRIAN VIEWS CONCERNING MANKIND.

### 1. *The Origin of Man.*

'Human Origins' according to Mr. Laing.

IN his work on *Human Origins*, Mr. Laing tries to give a popular account of the result of recent researches on the subject. He begins with the historical period, and by successive steps through the Neolithic and Palæolithic

<sup>1</sup> *Study of Religion*, 2nd edition, vol. i, p. 125.

ages, the Quaternary and Tertiary periods, traces 'human origins backwards to their 'source.' He does this avowedly for the benefit of the young and the working classes, 'the 'millions who, not having time and opportunity 'for reading technical works, feel a desire to 'keep themselves abreast of Modern Thought 'and of the advanced culture of the nineteenth 'century.' In doing this he makes no secret of his intention to show the discrepancies between the Biblical record and the account science gives of the matter. With this end in view he attempts to show from the early history of Egypt and Chaldea, that an advanced civilisation existed there 6000 or 7000 years ago; from which he infers that 'an almost unlimited duration of time' must have elapsed during which the human family developed from savagery to civilisation. This he does to cast suspicion on the correctness of Ussher's Bible chronology.<sup>1</sup> In his endeavour to reduce 'the vague periods of immense duration,' and referring to the fact that during the preglacial period man is found widely dispersed, he assumes that at least 250,000 years may be taken as an approximation to the *minimum* duration of the existence of the human race on the earth. However, when he comes to consider the positive evidence on which this rests, he is

Alleged  
antiquity  
of man.

<sup>1</sup> *Human Origins*, third thousand, pp. 177, 262, 316.

Uncertainty  
of the *data*.

compelled to admit that it leaves the question 'of man's ultimate origin completely open to 'speculation.'<sup>1</sup> That is to say, his young and ignorant disciples must accept in faith a scientific theory which their teacher allows wants verification, though he assures them that 'we *may* 'say with confidence of the problem of Tertiary 'man, that if not completely solved, it is very 'near solution, and that there is little doubt what 'the solution will be.'<sup>2</sup> His readers are invited to follow him into the jungle of the 'mythical 'past,' and to take on trust what may prove to be the romance of science rather than the result of true scientific investigation of reason.

To follow a bold explorer into unknown regions of scientific discovery may be pardonable, if not meritorious. But has the leader done more than awaken scientific curiosity and research? Without awaiting the final results of patient investigation, he takes for granted what is still unproved, and discredits the Scripture account on the strength of this assumption. Now, we are not here dealing with the question as to the credibility of the Mosaic account of man's origin or the correctness of Bible chronology. Ours is a totally different standpoint. We simply ask, is it wise or right to pronounce this judgment prema-

Suspicion  
rashly cast  
on the  
biblical  
record of  
man's  
origin.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 404 and *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> *Problems of the Future*, p. 130.



turely in favour of a provisional scientific theory, and to create prejudices against the authority of the Bible, the moral and religious value of which the author admits, especially when those whom he addresses are utterly unable to form a judgment with regard to the precise value of these speculations? Throughout this interesting volume on Human Origins the author touches on some deeper questions which go far beyond the dim and distant date when man first appears on the globe. He discusses the ultimate origin of human life and its primal source in 'the great First Cause of the 'Universe,' called, as he points out, in the sacred *Book of the Dead* among the Egyptians, 'the one 'only Being, the sole Creator, unchangeable in 'his infinite perfection, present in all time, past 'and future, everywhere and nowhere' (p. 114). But at this point our Author takes refuge in a hesitating agnosticism. He is most willing to accept certain forms and shapes of flints found by the side of what appear human remains in caves as signs of human workmanship, in order to establish the theory of Tertiary man, while at the same time he admits that the chips may be what they are by accident as well as by design (p. 363). But a survey of the whole universe and its marvellous mechanism cannot induce him to

Egyptian theories.

Doubtful testimony of flint implements.

Doubt and  
dogmatism  
combined.

pronounce decidedly in favour of any design which would betoken an 'intelligent mind' or a Divine Author. He refuses even a hearing to the Biblical account of man's origin, on the ground that it is refuted by the infallible dicta of science, whilst candidly admitting on this very subject that 'without a greater 'number of well-authenticated confirmations we 'must be content to hold our judgment to a 'certain extent in suspense' (p. 389). Why such leniency in one case? why such severity in the other? 'The man of science has learned 'to believe in justification, not by faith, but by 'verification,' says Professor Huxley somewhere. But here we find an expounder of modern science falling back on *a priori* reasoning to establish a theory. 'To deny the extension of 'human origin into the Tertiaries is practically to 'deny Darwin's theory of evolution altogether' (p. 410); this contention, therefore, must be affirmed, *volens volens*, with or without sufficient proof, and the Scripture account of man's origin condemned by the equally 'easy magic of nega-  
'tion.' He states, 'It must be admitted, how-  
'ever, that in our present state of knowledge  
'all these theories of place, time, and manner of  
'human origins are speculations rather than  
'science' (p. 418).

The present  
state of our  
knowledge  
admittedly  
imperfect.

If this be so, why should they in the mean-

while weaken or destroy the simple faith of believers in the Bible, just because it contains matter not in accordance with their own as yet unverified speculations? If the 'descent 'of man,' as traced hesitatingly by Darwin, is far from proven, why rob us of the fortifying faith that we are created in the Divine image, and that we may be 'transformed 'into the same image from glory to glory by 'the Lord the Spirit?' Man is the 'dominant 'note' in the 'sublime harmony of the universe,' affirms Mr. Laing in the closing words of the volume on 'Human Origins,' and are we to cease inquiring who set it vibrating? Here we are; we cannot divest ourselves of the tendency of tracing our origin. If it be a virtue as scientific inquirers to trace it to Tertiary man, why not as spiritual beings pursue our inquiries a step further back, and ask the eternal questions, whence we are, and whither we are going? Both the scientific and the religious instincts impel us to go on from the known to the unknown. Why peremptorily silence the last? Is this the cautious candour with which scientific philosophers approach profound problems? If to unlock the mysteries of the visible universe is right, as undoubtedly it is, then to turn the key on the unseen universe and write over the door 'No admittance here' is

If so, why  
foreclose the  
question  
in one  
direction?

unfair, and is impossible, if we are to devise any plan for our guidance in life and its duties.

## 2. *Man's Place in the Universe.*

In the view of our modern Zoroastrian, man is on all hands surrounded by powerful and opposing forces, primitive and indestructible, very much as 'nature' is found to be 'one huge aquarium, in which animal and vegetable life 'balance each other by their contrasted and 'supplemental action, and, as in the inorganic 'world, harmonious existence becomes possible 'by this due balance of opposing factors.'<sup>1</sup> What attracts him so strongly towards Zoroastrianism is its philosophical dualism, which he thus sees everywhere manifested. Body and spirit, male and female, odd and even, subject and object, in and out, upper and under, motion and rest, yea and nay,—all these are of this nature; so, too, are the polarities of action and reaction, attraction and repulsion, in the opposite poles of good and evil, light and darkness, which govern the inner world, and determine man's moral and spiritual condition. It is by the application of this principle to the facts of life that Mr. Laing explains the action and reaction of heredity and variation. The one produces stability and fixture of types,

Polarity a  
system of  
opposites.

Dualism.

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 101.

the other promotes progress through countless ages. It is in this way that man drifts along, moved or stopped by forces over which he has practically no control. It is by these counter-acting forces and their resultant that man is what he is, individually and in the aggregate. The same principle applies to mind and memory. There is the polarity of knowledge and ignorance, realism and idealism; all apprehension of phenomena comes through the mind, but what the mind itself is remains hidden from us. In the last instance everything is reduced to matter and motion, energies and atoms, the nature of which it is impossible to understand. Hence our reasoning faculty is tossed to and fro—now towards ‘the arid rocks of Materialism,’ then to ‘the whirling eddies of Spiritualism.’<sup>1</sup> By a mysterious process ideas fixed in the memory become part of our inner consciousness; by the deliberate effort of our faculties we go out of ourselves, and impress our ideas on the external universe. But the real relation between mind and matter, the inner and outer life, the Ego and Non-ego, forms the despair of philosophers. They are the opposites, or antinomies, which neither the monistic nor the ‘double-aspect’ theory of the universe can explain.<sup>2</sup>

Man the  
plaything  
of opposite  
forces.

Their mutual  
relation  
inexplicable.

The same polarity is affirmed to pervade the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 140 and 195.

practical world of every-day life ; wealth is the opposite of poverty, but they are constant companions. ‘As individuals and societies advance, and become higher and more complex in the scale of organisation, the law of polarity asserts itself with ever-increasing force, and contrasts become sharper.’ But ‘you can no more have a north without a south pole than you can have this progress without its counterpart of suffering.’ The same law applies to Individualism, and its opposite Socialism.<sup>1</sup>

The same is true in the moral world.

In the moral world virtue and vice co-exist, as light is accompanied by its shadow, and ‘there is a necessary and inevitable polarity of good and evil.’<sup>2</sup> It is the acknowledgment of this, as well as of the duty to worship the good principle ‘without paltering with our moral nature by professing to love and adore a Being who is the author of all the evil and misery in the world as well as of the good,’ which commends Zoroastrianism most to the scientific man of to-day, says Mr. Laing, and he would affirm that the excellent character and life of the Parsees—the Eastern Quakers—are proof that the system, as judged by results, leaves nothing to be desired.<sup>3</sup>

As a fact, but not as a necessary fact, Chris-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 174—176.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 205—218.

tian theology admits opposites and apparent contradictions such as the sovereignty of God and the freedom of human will, the humanity of Christ and His divinity, the co-existence of miracle and law, Unity and Trinity, the authority of the Bible and the right of criticism. But it does not on that ground resign itself to the fatalistic passivity of agnostic thought and the paralysing influences of moral or intellectual scepticism. If we are to remain forever ignorant of our origin and destiny, according to Mr. Laing's 'theory of reverent and 'devout agnosticism,' how can we go on courageously and vigorously on the path of duty? How can we perform the task of life assigned to us? We know nothing of Him who assigned it to us, or the reason and result of its performance or neglect.

Christian recognition of opposite forces.

The agnostic inference repudiated.

This reasoning would make us out to be mere machines, moved by an unknown hand like pawns on the chess-board of existence. Our minds would be swayed hither and thither on the sea of doubt, like a vessel without charts, anchor, or compass. We should be uncertain as to the reports of our inner consciousness and the reality of the external world,—the soul itself, in Haeckel's phrase, being naught else but 'the sum of our 'feeling, willing, and thinking—the sum of those 'physiological functions whose elementary organs

It militates against moral responsibility.



‘are constituted by the microscopic ganglion-cells of our brain,’—ourselves but human atoms, moved by the inexorable forces of hunger and thirst or the craving for ease and enjoyment, each atom revolving on its own axis in the struggle of existence with its fellows. Then what hope is left for the individual or the race, and what support does this view of our position give us in the struggle with adverse forces ?

Unless the spiritual conception of life and duty, with its suggestion of an ultimate solution of their mysterious contradictions, comes in to supplement the teachings of natural science, man in the universe is simply handed over to the ‘rhythm of motion’ of the impersonal powers, now making for good and now for evil. Christianity herein differs fundamentally from Zoroastrianism, that it supplies the power to high effort and patient suffering, by girding man for the conflict, and promising support to insure the conquest of good over evil to its votaries. According to Zoroastrianism, man’s place in the universe is an unstable point, his plan of action rendered uncertain by the array of forces whose power and direction are in a great measure incalculable and unassailable, whilst his destiny is shrouded from view and left a vague surmise. It is for this reason, as Mr. Laing himself says, that ‘no religion has

Christianity  
as a moral  
force  
contrasted  
with Zoro-  
astrianism.

'ever to the same extent [as Christianity] become to the great mass of its adherents a rule of conduct and an incentive, strengthened by Divine sanction, to lead pure and upright lives.'<sup>1</sup>

### 3. *Man's Future Destiny.*

If once you allow yourself to think about the origin and end of things, it has been said, you will have to believe in a God and immortality. For this reason modern thinkers of the school here referred to ignore as far as possible final causes when discussing the course of Nature. They do not deny an 'orderly sequence of events;' they admit a reasonableness in the cosmic process, and even a tendency towards some kind of final consummation. But they refuse to acknowledge anything beyond an 'animating principle' pervading and overruling all.<sup>2</sup> In their view the world is not a meaningless muddle of mechanical movements; but man, as the measure of all things, cannot with his finite mind reach the Infinite Power behind it. He sees the progress of events towards some goal, but is unable to pronounce on the plan, if any, on which it proceeds. If there is a purpose, it is hidden from us. God is inconceivable, immor-

Spiritual  
view of the  
universe.

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> See Martineau's *Study of Religion*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. xvii, where he refers to this view as represented by Professor Fiske, which he himself does not share.

talities unbelievable, and all that remains for mortals is to do their duty in this life. There is no wish absolutely to deny the existence of God or life hereafter. Not absolute faith or absolute disbelief, but faintness in believing or clinging to the 'larger hope' is the characteristic of modern thought.<sup>1</sup> But the 'tepid allegiance' to received beliefs, as Mr. Greg shows,<sup>2</sup> is insufficient to produce any kind of enthusiasm; whereas certainty, which is the life-giving power of religion, is the very element which modern thought rigorously excludes from all speculation on these subjects. Under these circumstances the Darwinian theory of evolution, so far from lessening, rather increases the 'tremendous 'moral perplexity.' Among its articles of belief are such as these,—that 'the Cosmos, as a whole, is immortal;' that 'immortality in a 'scientific sense is conservation of substance.'<sup>3</sup>

Faith as a  
moral tonic.

But can these ideas supply that 'tonic of faith' which gives zest to life, and acts as the salt which removes insipidity from the weary routine of mere existence? If whatever is not founded on a material substratum is of necessity a castle in the air, if there be no Divine reality behind the phenomenal world, no eternal standard of moral rectitude, no Divine inspirations in art and the

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> See *Enigmas of Life*, 18th edition, p. 221, *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Haeckel, pp. 50, 51.

art of life, if all science, art, and ethics are rooted in the soil of the objective world, and our highest ideas and ideals are nothing but the creation of brain matter in certain combinations,—then our life is merely vegetative, and, like the plant torn from the soil, ends with death. In that case what becomes of the boast that ‘our age has become rational, industrial, and progressive?’ If we have lost that faith in the future possibilities of man which in the past has been the spiritual force from which have proceeded that independence of thought, economic effort, and progressive movement in every department of life, which have made Christian nations predominant in the world, will the progress continue if that faith be lost? or if a religious creed be adopted, in part or entirely, which is retrogressive?

Mr. Laing thinks that, in spite of its excellency, Zoroastrianism will not take the place of Christianity, which, he admits, has achieved all this; and we agree with him, but from very different reasons from those which he assigns. The real reasons, we think, are these; to embrace such a version of Zoroastrianism as he tenders for our acceptance would be *a return to a less perfect form of religion than the one we possess*; it would amount to a preference for a system which does not even profess to solve

Christianity  
progressive,  
Zoroastrian-  
ism retro-  
gressive.

life's problems over one that does so, partly at least. Zoroastrianism, in its modern guise, fails entirely to do that which Christianity can do, viz. save the world from sin and sorrow, or man from despair and despondency. It was because of these and similar deficiencies that it was left behind in the development of religious thought.<sup>1</sup>

*Summary of and Reflections on the  
Foregoing.*

Zoroastrian-  
ism deals  
with blind  
forces; not  
ultimate  
realities.

This, then, is the result of our examination of the view of the universe and man as presented in the system here under consideration, —that system amounts to a belief in the blind forces of Nature, good and evil, by action and reaction, and in accordance with fixed laws, causing a gradual evolution in the forms and functions of organisms, and bringing about the rich variety of physical, moral, and intellectual life. But in regard to the origin of life, language, and thought, the foundations of morals, the ideal factors of existence, and the possibilities of man's future destiny, it does not profess to be competent to pronounce a verdict.

<sup>1</sup> Kant, the great German philosopher, said, after a careful perusal of the whole work of the Zend Avesta, that it bears not the slightest trace of philosophical ideas. See *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsees* by Martin Haug, p. 16; also *Present Day Tract* No. 25, p. 57.

It is for this reason that M. Brunetière, an eminent contributor to one of the most progressive reviews in both hemispheres, has said repeatedly, that science has lost its prestige, because it has disappointed those who believed in its promises, and has been declared bankrupt in the court of public opinion. It has failed, he says, in its attempt to laicise morality and to organise humanity. Hence the reaction which has now for some time been setting in in favour of religion, for half a century discredited by the exponents of science. In the conflict of science and religion, the former has lost ground, the latter has reconquered a portion of territory.

Brunetière  
and reaction  
in favour of  
religion.

‘The physical and natural sciences have promised to suppress mystery; but not only have they failed in doing this, but it is evident now-a-days that they will never be able to clear it up. They are powerless, I will not say in resolving, but in properly putting the only questions of importance, those which touch on the origin of man, the law of conduct, his future destiny. The unknown surrounds us, envelops us, holds us bound, and we cannot draw from physical laws or physiological results any means of understanding them.’<sup>1</sup>

In the same way it has been pointed out by an English writer that Herbert Spencer’s suggestion of some possible great unknown Power behind known phenomena is accepted so readily; since ‘man requires a religious belief to restore that equilibrium to the mind which scientific

Religion  
needed by  
man.

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des deux Mondes*, tome cxxvii, 1ère Livraison (Jan., 1895), p. 99. See also *La Renaissance de l’Idéalisme*, 1896, by the same author.

‘modes of thought have temporarily disturbed.’<sup>1</sup> But this is very different from the jaunty, almost jocund agnosticism of Mr. Laing, inviting a crowd of shallow and superficial would-be sceptics who put their faith in popular science to hail ‘the fresh bracing breeze of modern ‘science’ to ‘sweep through and sweeten the ‘age we live in.’ The profounder thinkers of the present day, and those among them who are in complete sympathy with the real progress of science, lament over the loss of the old faith which they have reluctantly abandoned, and with touching pathos express a yearning for some spiritual revelation to lift the curtain which hides from us the meaning of life. Thus that accomplished writer, Frederic W. H. Myers, in the *Essay on the Disenchantment of France*, says, ‘In that country where the pure dicta of ‘science reign in the intellectual classes with less ‘interference from custom, sentiment, tradition, ‘than even in Germany itself, we shall find that ‘Science, at her present point, is a depressing, a ‘disintegrating energy.’ He goes on to illustrate this by many telling quotations from Bourget, Montpassant, and similar modern writers, of which the following, taken from the last but one mentioned, is a sample :

Melancholy results of a mechanical view of the universe.

<sup>1</sup> *The Religion of the Future*, by John Beattie Crozier (1880), pp. 187, 188 ; cf. *ibid.*, 192, 201, 215 ; also see Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 125, 126.



'Science has rendered it impossible to repose faith in any supernatural revelation, while at the same time she proclaims herself unable to unriddle the problems of which revelation offered a solution. There are some who have thought to find the remedy for this new and singular crisis by imagining the human race in the future as delivered from all thought of the Beyond, and indifferent to what we call the Absolute. But this is a gratuitous hypothesis, and seems little in harmony with the general march of thought. . . . It is probable that in the final bankruptcy of hope to which science is leading us many of these souls will sink into a despair such as Pascal would have sunk into had he lost his faith,' &c.<sup>1</sup>

All the finer minds, impressed by the 'divine seriousness of life,' are thus profoundly saddened by baffled attempts at harmonising the real with the ideal factors of existence, or at divining the secret of the universe in the utter darkness which comes from the extinction of the lamp of faith in the sanctuary of our inner consciousness. 'If man is to march with the cosmos,' says Mr. Myers mournfully, 'it must be progress and not joy, which is his goal,'—'endless advance by endless effort, and, if need be, endless pain;' and in these words he expresses the noble and brave spirit which animates modern minds in the presence of the all-pervading idea of 'cosmic law.'

F. W. H.  
Myers on  
sadness of  
scientific  
Agnosticism.

'The lesson of evolution, as this evolutionist [he refers to Tennyson] delivers it to us, is, "Lay hold on Life!" "For life the universe is making; Help then that life to be!" The final purpose, indeed, which we may thus subserve, lies far beyond the grasp of men. But while we still subserve it—through

<sup>1</sup> *Science and a Future Life*, pp. 87-89.

‘stress, perchance, and strenuous pain—how easily may these  
‘ancient lisplings of the human spirit find their fulfilment by  
‘the way!’<sup>1</sup>

The remedy  
according to  
Mr. Balfour.

But they cannot find their fulfilment unless the harmonious action of the forces of nature be supplemented by the ‘powers of the world to ‘come,’ and unless human beings are able to look beyond to the final issue concerning which science maintains a partial if not complete silence. The only remedy in such a case consists in ‘simply setting up, side by side with ‘the creed of natural science, another and supplementary set of beliefs, which may minister ‘to needs and aspirations which science cannot ‘meet, and may speak amid silences which ‘science is powerless to break.’<sup>2</sup>

What do these teach us? What effects may be expected from their acceptance? These questions are best answered if we consider the Christian view of (a) the historical process, (b) of man’s duty, (c) of our future destiny.

### THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN.

#### 1. *History in the Light of Christianity.*

THE real and only deep problem of the universe, including that to which all the rest are

<sup>1</sup> Loc. cit., p. 206.

<sup>2</sup> Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, p. 186.

subordinate, will ever be the conflict between faith and doubt. This is a saying attributed somewhere to Goethe, and it has far-reaching bearings. Applied to the subject before us, it means that all depends on our belief in a Divine plan in the ordering of things, and a conviction that the energy is not merely 'a primitive 'indestructible something' of which we absolutely know nothing beyond its effects. It means that everything depends on the question whether we believe that the progress of humanity is directed by a 'Divinity which shapes 'our ends.' Is human history simply what Mr. Huxley calls a 'mechanical engineering of 'living machines,' or are we able to find our way through the dark labyrinth of life by the Ariadne's thread of belief in a Divine providence? Without this all is confusion, a sum of detached details without visible connection, inexplicable and incongruous. With it the whole becomes an organic unity, being now regarded as the produce of a Supreme Mind. Even then the process may be partly hidden in mystery; and in trying to trace the reason of things we need much trust where certitude is denied. But no less than this satisfies our intellectual yearnings and our higher aspirations. The advantage of modern Zoroastrianism consists, we are told, in this, that 'it is not dragged down by such a dead

The great problem of the universe.

Christian belief in God gives unity to system of nature and meaning to human life.

‘weight of traditional dogmas and miracles as ‘still hangs upon the skirts of Christianity.’<sup>1</sup> We should rather say that in its light and airy form, as presented to us by Mr. Laing, it has the lightness of a feather hovering between heaven and earth. It never touches the sure ground of fact; it never succeeds in ascending into the higher regions of the spiritual serenity of faith. It speaks of ‘the First Cause, who ‘manifests Himself in the universe under fixed ‘laws which involve the principle of polarity,’ and of ‘the feeling of reverence and love for the ‘Great Unknown.’ But how can an unknown quantity, though it be infinity, inspire *religion*, as distinguished from poetical emotion? What the state of mind is which is thus produced in serious sceptics, Mr. Greg has described vividly in the following passage:

Serious  
sceptics not  
satisfied with  
Laing's easy-  
going theory.

‘To such men existence is one long note of interrogation, ‘and the universe a storehouse of problems all clamorous for ‘solution. The old fable of the Sphinx is true for them. Life ‘is the riddle they have to read, and death, sadness, and the ‘waste of years is the penalty if they interpret it aright. A ‘few, perhaps, may find the key, and reach the “peace which ‘passeth all understanding.” A larger number fancy they have ‘found it, and are serene in their fortunate delusion. Others ‘retire from the effort, conscious that they have been baffled ‘in the search, but, partly in weariness, partly in trust, partly ‘in content, acquiescing in their failure. Others again, and these ‘too often the nobler and the grander souls, reach the verge ‘of their pilgrimage still battling with the dark enigma, and ‘dying less of age or malady than of the profound depression

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 204.

‘that must be the lot of all who have wasted life in fruitless efforts to discover how it should be spent and how regarded, and which even a sincere belief in the flood of life which lies behind the great black curtain of death cannot quite avail to dissipate.’<sup>1</sup>

To natures like these, an easy-going belief in an unknown cause of an incomprehensible universe is simply impossible. They are apt to say, ‘If all the moral grandeur we feel in the Cosmos may be the mere figment of our imaginations,’<sup>2</sup> then the scraps of knowledge afforded by science are nothing but ‘the shells to be picked up on the shore of the ocean of truth; and these will become scantier, and the agnostics of the future will gaze forth ever more hopelessly on that gloomy and unvoyageable sea.’ A worship of the primal force of Nature, or a ‘purified worship of natural forces,’ or of ‘cosmic law’ identified with God,—in short, a reverential love for cosmic energy above, immanent in or beyond the world of actual or apparent existence, is, after all, only a kind of make-believe religion. Sincere adoration, habitual and permanent admiration and affection, can only be felt for a Divine Personality, which forms the object of worship to Christians. Such a Divine Person has, we believe, revealed Himself to us in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of His glory and the express image

A make-believe religion.

Contrast with the Christian revelation.

<sup>1</sup> *Enigmas of Life*, pp. 182, 183.

<sup>2</sup> Myers, loc. cit., pp. 13 and 74.

of His person, and who when He had purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. i. 2).

Further, if we follow the course of human history—the gradual ‘ascent of man,’ waiving all knotty questions as to his antiquity, and all differences of opinion as to the reliability of the records we possess, historical or traditional, and merely taking the broad fact of human development as generally understood,—we find that here, too, everything is enveloped in darkness concerning his first beginnings and final fate. In fact, science adds to the perplexities by which our existence here and fate hereafter are surrounded. As Mr. Balfour has put it so forcibly in the work already quoted,—

Our existence a riddle which science renders more difficult of solution.

‘Man, so far as natural science by itself is able to teach us, is no longer the final cause of the universe, the heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science indeed as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved, after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past, and see that its history is of blood and tears, of helpless blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and

'the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness, which in this obscure corner has for a brief space broken the contented silence of the universe, will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. "Imperishable monuments" and "immortal deeds," death itself, and love stronger than death, will be as though they had never been. Nor will anything that *is* be better or be worse for all that the labour genius, devotion, and suffering of man have striven through countless generations to effect' (pp. 30, 31).

But when we look at the matter from a Christian point of view, we see the principle of Divine government unfolded in the course of our own history, and in the 'bewildering game of life' we see more than chance reduced to a doctrine, for we are fully convinced that, in spite of appearances to the contrary, 'the Lord 'God omnipotent reigneth,' though the Ruler is hidden from our sight. We find that, in the words of an historian, 'the world's history is the world's judgment,' when we see in the sequence of events, linking cause to effect, the realisation of Divine justice, so that even 'now is the judgment of this world.' Then, indeed, in full assurance of faith, we are able to say with a sceptical writer, 'There's a something that watches over us, and our individuality endures, that's my faith,' though we should omit what follows,—'and that's all my faith.'<sup>1</sup>

Belief in providence the key to the knowledge of history.

Thus we see how true are the words of the

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, Jan., 1893, p. 169.



Lord Acton  
on relation of  
faith to  
history.

lately appointed Professor of History at Cambridge, Lord Acton, when he said in his inaugural lecture that the notions man forms of history actually 'cover the articles of his 'creed.' From it follows the converse truth, that the course of human history and man's moral development will be forward and upward in the ages of faith, and backward and downward in historical epochs marked by doubt.

## 2. *The Sense of Duty inspired by Christian Faith.*

Zoroastrian-  
ism con-  
founds  
physical and  
moral evil.

We are told that 'the identification of moral 'and physical evil, which is one of the most 'essential and peculiar tenets of the Zoroastrian 'creed, is fast becoming a leading idea in 'modern civilisation,'<sup>1</sup> and that the conviction is gaining strength that we are what we are by reason of our physical environment, and that therefore we must look to physical causes for the root of ethics. If this be so, then morality is degraded into a utilitarian system, since general well-being is thus made the sole aim of moral conduct, and there is great danger of our losing sight of the ideal, and ignoring the spiritual cravings of humanity. This amounts, as Dr. Martineau shows, to bringing 'a blight upon the possibilities of conscience;'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i, p. 512.

whereas, as Mr. Myers puts it, the affirmation of a spiritual universe is closely linked to a claim for moral evolution.<sup>1</sup> A belief in 'the *'inevitable* polarity of good and evil,'<sup>2</sup> coupled with devoted effort to make the good principle prevail, which we are told is the essence of modern Zoroastrianism, is scarcely enough to ensure moral progress, unless it can be clearly shown that 'inevitable' does not mean permanent co-existence of good and evil. But neither Mr. Laing nor his authorities do this. Besides, he tells us that the element of morality comes latest in the progress of religion. It seems strange, then, that he should advise us to return to Zoroastrianism, a past stage of religious development, with its 'vague and unconscious dualism,' and with a professedly defective code of ethics and an imperfect sense of guilt, even though it speaks of the duty of holiness, and that he should bid us take it for our modern guide in religion and morals.<sup>3</sup> It would be a reversal of the chronological order to adopt a course which was the very opposite of that

It leads to moral scepticism.

<sup>1</sup> Loc. cit. supra, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 179; cf. Haug, loc. cit., p. 258, and Tract No. 25, p. 26, note.

<sup>3</sup> Darmesteter, in his *Introduction to the Zend-Avesta* (Sacred Books of the East), speaks of the sacred books as 'the ruins of a religion' (vol. iv, pp. xi, xii); and adds, 'There has been no other great belief in the world that ever left such poor and meagre monuments of its past splendours.' See also Tract No. 25, p. 49, seq.

taken by the Magi—the followers of Zoroaster—to go back from West to East, and from the nineteenth century after to the tenth or, according to Mr. Laing, the thirteenth century before Christ.

But the most recent confession of scientific faith traces the principle of ethics to the social instincts of highly developed vertebrates, arriving through many a long series of successive steps in the development of the soul in the animal kingdom ‘to the human sense of duty and conscience.’<sup>1</sup> But if, as Haeckel assumes, God be nothing else but the ‘infinite sum of natural forces,’<sup>2</sup> will this creed suffice to inspire the ‘enthusiasm of humanity’ and an exalted sense of duty? What becomes of the ‘majesty of the moral law’ in a purely material, *i. e.* unmoral cosmos, where the law of the strongest prevails? If God be identified with the supreme law of the universe, and that law, according to the dictum of science, be the law of natural selection, it is hard to see where the law of love is to come in as the prevailing rule of moral conduct, unless, indeed, as a trick of Nature to cheat us into being useful whilst she flatters us that we are good. In that case ‘Nature, indifferent to our happiness, indifferent to our morals, but sedulous of our survival, commends disinterested virtue to our practice by decking it out in all

And encourages  
moral indifference.

<sup>1</sup> Haeckel, *ibid.*, pp. 8, 9.      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79.

‘the splendour which the specifically ethical ‘sentiments alone are capable of supplying.’<sup>1</sup>

Again, to escape the difficulty of believing in a God who, according to his theory, if omnipotent, must be the author of evil as well as of good, Mr. Laing suggests that ‘with a polar ‘theory of existence the difficulty is relegated to ‘the realm of the unknown;’<sup>2</sup> and that, leaving it there, we can go on cheerfully doing our duty in our day and generation. But how? The supreme unknown is powerless to confer a feeling of confidence that we are on the right track. The suggestion evades the difficulty, and does not solve it. ‘The sentiment of *duty* is not the pure essence ‘of the moral idea itself,’ as Dr. Martineau puts it, ‘but the consciousness of its administration ‘to us from the *supreme source*.’ And again, ‘A ‘law neither thought nor felt but by creatures ‘limited as myself, and imposed merely by the ‘multitudinous consensus, is commended to me ‘by no higher claim than the cogency of a successful vote, and makes vain pretensions to any ‘holy source.’<sup>3</sup> It is by a firm belief in a Divine Lawgiver and supernatural functions, which put upon the law the stamp of Divine authority, that man is enabled to fulfil the law, and to triumph over the temptation of transgression. Religious

Dr. Martineau on ‘*supreme source* of a sense of duty.’

<sup>1</sup> Balfour, *ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Problems of the Future*, pp. 225, 226.

<sup>3</sup> *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i, pp. xxvii, xxviii.

conviction, undisturbed by the unsolved problem of evil, has in the past been the mainstay of moral conduct and the source of moral strength, and it is so still. A naturalistic base for moral operations in the warfare with unknown and incalculable forces of evil is unsafe and unsatisfactory. The ancient stoicism failed in taking up this position. Modern stoicism is not apparently more successful.

*A personal  
authority  
needed in  
the realm  
of morals.*

But take your stand on the Christian faith, and a superior force is introduced to oppose the 'ruinous force of will,' a stronger motive is introduced than 'the strongest motive' of the determinist, namely, self-determination to follow the will of God. 'It was the irresistible pleading 'of the moral consciousness which first drove me 'to rebel against the limits of the merely scientific 'conception' of morals, is the confession of Dr. Martineau; and he adds, 'Ethics are dependent 'upon scientific conditions, though not complete 'in them.'<sup>1</sup> It is acquiescence in the will of God and loving assimilation with the perfect manhood of Christ, and the endeavour to become partakers of the divine nature, which constitute the real forces on which moral conquest depends. 'Thus the force of moral restraint gets 'wings, and with a last spring of the toiling feet

<sup>1</sup> *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i, pp. xii, xvi; and cf. *ibid.*, p. 86, where he dwells in his own manner of speaking as a Unitarian philosopher on the love of Christ constraining us.

'is borne through the air with the swiftness of  
'a devout enthusiasm.'<sup>1</sup> This, too, is true of  
the enthusiasm of humanity and social ethics.  
'Love remains the supreme moral law of  
'rational religion,' says Haeckel; 'the love, that  
'is to say, that holds the balance between egotism  
'and altruism' (p. 64). But self-love will often  
counterbalance the love of others, unless subdued  
by Christian grace and supported by faith in  
the divine authority of Him who republished the  
law of Nature, and gave fervour and direction  
to the ethical instinct when He reaffirmed what  
the Mosaic law had enforced already, 'Thou  
'shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Moreover  
it is by the sense of union with the Divine  
power and love that human affection and devo-  
tion find their hallowed consecration. It is in  
common acknowledgment of the Fatherhood of  
God that men feel their relationship as 'brothers  
'of the common lot,' and learn to love as brethren.

Haeckel's  
morality  
founded on  
physics com-  
pared with  
Christian  
ethics.

A comparison of the benediction with which  
Haeckel's 'monistic' confession of faith closes,  
'May God, the Spirit of the good, the beautiful,  
'and the true, be with us,' with the apostolic  
invocation of the doxology, 'The grace of our  
'Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the  
'fellowship of the Holy Ghost,' conveys at once  
the inadequacy of the creed of science con-

Two  
benedictions.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 226.

trasted with the creed of Christendom. The paralysing influence of the 'creed of France' on French literature, when it describes man's conduct 'in moments of decisive choice of 'moral crisis,' has been pointed out by Mr. Myers in the volume already referred to. The simple reason is this, that religion has a vitalising influence on ethical choice and conduct to which science can lay no claim. To fulfil the dictates of duty, and to follow persistently in the paths of virtue, man requires an inspiring and sustaining faith. Severed from the roots of religious belief, and maintaining a parasitical existence round the stem of a religion which, becoming wavering and undecided, has ceased to be a vital principle of action, moral progress is rendered impossible on the soil of dead faith.

### 3. *The Christian Outlook—Hereafter.*

The modern Zoroastrian regards faith in future life as useful and pleasant.

Of the system embraced by our 'Modern Zoroastrian' we are told that whilst 'it, and it 'alone, is consistent with the facts of science, 'the deductions of reason, the axioms of morality, 'while at the same time it denies nothing,' it 'leaves an ample background on which to paint 'the visions of faith, and to reflect back to us 'spectral images of our hopes and fears, our longings and aspirations.' <sup>1</sup> But of what value are

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 173. Mr. Laing reminds us of the saying of Herodotus about the ancient Egyptians that their



such spectral images to 'souls immortal,' which by the law of their being, verified by the experience of centuries, 'must for ever soar'? Does not such a form of half-belief clip the wings and impede the flight to what are thus deliberately described as the imaginary regions of religious Fancyland or Fairyland? If we are to believe in a God, we must be content to believe, so Mr. Laing tells us, that part of His scheme is 'that at a certain stage of the development of our race we should have to exchange 'the certainty of simple and limited faith for 'the fainter trust in a larger hope.'<sup>1</sup>

But why not rather say, if we believe in the limitation of human knowledge and the infirmities of human nature generally, we can understand why at certain stages of human development the mind, dazzled by recent discoveries and suffering from spiritual ineptitude, which comes from materialistic modes of thought, has a fainter perception of the things immortal and eternal, until it regains its vividness in the perception of Divine things after temporary effacement? This was the case in the age succeeding the temporary eclipse of faith when the thinking world was captivated by Neo-

Faintness  
of trust  
arises from  
materialistic  
modes of  
thought.

thoughts were so fixed on a future life that they looked upon their homes as mere temporary inns, and their tombs as their true permanent homes (*Human Origins*, p. 112).

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, p. 295.

platonism, the Renaissance scepticism, and the period of the naturalistic revival at the close of the last century. The philosophers during those past epochs expressed themselves very much in the same way as do those of the nineteenth century. But they failed in permanently satisfying serious inquirers after spiritual truth.

The great  
Ideal: how  
blurred and  
dimmed.

Mr. Laing admits that no better ideal and no more perfect example can be given to the world than the life and character of Christ.<sup>1</sup> But the picture of the perfect Man and the grandeur of the ideal are blurred and dimmed by impugning, as he does, the veracity of the Man and the credentials of His mission who 'brought life and immortality to light.'<sup>2</sup> Without the hope of a restitution of all things, a final adjustment in the presence of so many illusions, with 'the shadow of an inevitable doom' coming in front of us, what profit is there 'to gaze 'upon the cosmos for ever from outside? to pass 'and leave the giant forces playing with a purport (if any purport) which is for ever hid 'from men? What gain to watch for an hour 'the inscrutable pageant? to be summoned out 'of nothingness into illusion, and evolved to 'aspire and to decay?'<sup>3</sup> A belief in final absorp-

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> See *Problems of the Future*, pp. 246, 247.

<sup>3</sup> Myers, *ibid.*, p. 75; and for an illustration how this dismal creed affected Darwin himself see *ibid.*, pp. 65, 66.

tion in the All or Humanity as the only mode of posthumous existence is a feeble reed to lean on in the long, sometimes weary, journey of life.

‘The sincere man’s mind,’ says Zoroaster himself, not his interpreter, ‘is aspiring to the ‘everlasting immortality, the destroyer of the ‘wicked ; she is the possession of the living wise, ‘the lord of the creatures.’<sup>1</sup> But our modern Zoroastrian discards this part of the religion he recommends to our acceptance. He rather is inclined to say with Matthew Arnold,—

Zoroaster, unlike his modern disciples, a believer in immortality.

‘ But why not rather say,  
Hath man a second life? *Pitch this one high !*  
Sits there no judge in heaven our sin to see ?  
*More strictly, then, the inward judge obey !*  
Was Christ a man like us ? *Ah ! let us try*  
*If we then, too, can be such men as He.’*

Will it not enable us to pitch it higher still if we believe the words of Him who says, ‘I am ‘the Resurrection and the Life?’ Why not go beyond the vague surmises of the creed of science, and listen to the ‘intimations of immortality’ of other poets, which help to establish equilibrium in the mind, perturbed and uncertain without such a belief in the survival and renewal after death? This would help us to establish that scientific synthesis of life and

Intimations of immortality in modern poets.

<sup>1</sup> Haug, p. 154; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 216, 265, 266, Tract No. 25, p. 28. Also Darmesteter, *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i, p. lxxix, and *Religious Systems of the World* (1892), 2nd ed., pp. 187—193.

Coleridge.

death of which Coleridge speaks, and which is far more consonant with true reason than a belief in an abrupt termination of existence when the short life here lived ends. In a universe where nothing is destructible, though all is subject to change, belief in the immortality of the soul cannot be renounced on scientific grounds. 'The great destiny of enfranchised souls' is at least as important from this point of view as the indestructibility of atoms. Why, then, not follow here the lead of a poet whom Mr. Laing loves to quote as the interpreter of modern science and modern thought, and say,—

Tennyson.

'Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark.

'For though from out our bourne of time and place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my *Pilot* face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.'<sup>1</sup>

## CONCLUSION.

No resting  
place in  
scientific  
scepticism.

Thus it will appear that the position taken up in the works examined is untenable from a logical and practical point of view. Scientific scepticism does not afford 'a permanent resting-

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson's 'Crossing the Bar;' cf. Martineau, *Study of Religion*, 2nd ed., vol. ii, pp. 326, 327; a remarkable quotation from Professor Fiske on this subject, showing the inconsistency of a belief in evolution with a disbelief in 'everlasting persistence of the spiritual element.'

‘place for human reason.’ If it could do so, it would be inconsistent with itself and with scientific progress, which depends on continued inquiry. With the thoughts of serious minds turned on the problems of the day, there will be an earnest determination to make the attempt, at least, to solve them. Such minds are not likely to be captivated for any length of time by the platitudes and comfortable assurances of an easy-going unbelief.

Speaking of the Greek philosophers in their inquiries into the claims of Zoroastrianism, in the course of which they often treated Zoroaster as if he were another Plato, the most recent of the translators of the *Zend-Avesta* tells us that ‘the real object aimed at in studying the old ‘religion was to form a new one.’<sup>1</sup> That is exactly the case now, when some have taken in hand to identify Zoroastrianism with a species of naturalised Christianity, in order to supply a new creed to suit the requirements of a scientific age. But we deny the assumed effeteness of the old faith, and with it the necessity of the new substitute. In the age of ‘shallow ‘Deism,’ Bishop Butler remarked, ‘it is come, ‘I know not how, to be taken for granted by ‘many persons that Christianity is not so much ‘a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at

Zoroastrianism is a kind of naturalised Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> Darmesteter, *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i, p. xiii.

Fails as a  
new religion  
adapted  
to the  
scientific.

‘length discovered to be fictitious.’ But the cheerful scepticism of the age here referred to disappeared with a return to Christian belief. In the same way signs are not wanting that the superficial Theism so fashionable now, which expatiates on the ‘blessing of unbelief,’ and enables such persons as follow the lead of Mr. Laing and others to make a leap into the dark unknown with a light heart, is making room in its turn for searchings of heart of a sterner kind, and a return to the faith of Christ. Scientific Pyrrhonism has its charms for some minds, who find pleasure mainly in speculative toying with problems of profound interest; but it does not recommend itself to thinkers made of sterner stuff, accustomed to strenuous efforts in their searching after truth. In this way modern Pyrrhonism, as Du Bois Raymond shows, leads directly to supernaturalism.<sup>1</sup> Even the author of the *Progress of Science*,<sup>2</sup> a work introduced in the most flattering terms in a commendatory letter of Mr. Laing to the publisher, expresses a serious doubt whether ‘the extinction of the belief in a supernatural agency presiding over, ordering, and directing the working of the Universe’ be not rather matter of regret than congratulation. He also adds

<sup>1</sup> *Ueber die Greuzen des Naturerkennens, &c.* (1891), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Progress of Science*, by J. Villier Marmery, with an Introduction by S. Laing (1895), p. 288.

that 'the knowledge of the existence of law  
 'leaves the integrity of pure belief untouched.  
 'Science has explained only the *working* of the  
 'cosmos, but neither its cause nor its creation  
 'nor its meaning. . . . It has owned itself  
 'powerless even to discover ultimates. . . . It  
 'owns that mystery meets man just as much now  
 'as it ever did, or can ; but it has removed that  
 'mystery further back into the infinity of the  
 'unknowable, and thereby removed also into  
 'further depths the object of belief, making it  
 'more awful and incomprehensible.' Under these  
 circumstances, the acknowledged inability of  
 naturalism should teach its modern exponent  
 not to seek refuge in nescience, but at least  
 to consider the claims of supernatural revela-  
 tion, and not to expect certitude in matters of  
 faith where so much obscurity is left in matters  
 of fact, and not to make immoderate demands  
 for proof in the case of religious doctrines  
 when the dogmas of science cannot be estab-  
 lished without some recourse being taken to  
 'imaginative faith.' If the natural under-  
 standing cannot fathom the deeper meaning  
 of the cosmos, the spiritual understanding  
 'cannot be expected to embrace in its finite  
 'grasp the whole of the unseen Universe.'

The need of  
 'imaginative  
 faith' according  
 to Laing's  
 scientific  
 disciple.

If fragmentary knowledge differs from the  
 establishment of scientific doctrine, the fact that



Union of  
religion and  
science.

‘we know in part’ must by parity of reason serve as an excuse why thinking men should accept at any rate provisionally the dogmas of scientific theology. Both alike are the result of continuous development of human thought. ‘If ‘the certitudes of science lose themselves in the ‘depth of unfathomable mystery, it may be well ‘that out of the same depth there should emerge ‘the certitudes of religion.’<sup>1</sup> There are those who do not despair of some reunion of science and faith. Nor do we think that such a reconciliation is impossible. But if this alliance has been rendered easy because, according to our modern way of thinking, as Mr. J. A. Symonds puts it, ‘the conceptions of God’s law ‘tend to coalesce in the scientific theory of ‘the Universe,—in other words, spirituality is ‘restored to nature, which comes to be regarded ‘as a manifestation of infinite vitality;’<sup>2</sup> if this alliance means that we are to identify God with the principle of causality, or to regard Him simply as the unifying bond of all existences,—in other words, if that which originates and gives unity to nature be not the one true God, but a mental abstraction,—then it must be acknowledged religion has little to gain from

<sup>1</sup> Balfour, *Foundations of Belief*, p. 288; also see *ibid.*, p. 336, and *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> See his article on the ‘Progress of Thought in our Time,’ in the *Fortnightly Review* for June, 1887, p. 892.

such a union, though the attempt to bring it about, as has been observed, shows that science requires Theism for its own completion.

Is God the principle of causality only?

In short, the Hall of Science is not the Temple of Truth, though a pathway may be discovered leading from the one to the other. Reason and inquiry, with scientific methods of verification, help in scrutinising the evidence and examining the credentials of religion; they also may help in more correctly formulating the theories of theology. But the subject-matter of revelation is beyond their reach. Besides, as Professor Tyndall puts it, 'religious feeling is as much a verity as any other part of human consciousness; and against it, on its subjective side, the waves of science beat in vain.' Here 'the higher demonstrative intensity' of faith in all ages of the world has proved itself far more effective as a moral force than 'ordinary intellectual certitude.' And this is true not only of the ignorant crowd, but also of the cultured few, in whom the mystical and emotional elements of human nature have not been starved out by the entire absorption in specialist studies. It is this which in every age of intellectual activity like our own has produced alternately conflicts between faith and science, and attempts at reconciliation between faith, authoritative religion, and reason. For these two tendencies

Tyndall on claims of religious sentiment.

are simply aspects of the same effort to satisfy the head and the heart, and to adjust the relationship between knowledge of facts and the less tangible though no less real intuitions of feeling. Man cannot live without the one or the other, and the vast majority for practical purposes want the assurances of religious faith more than the convincing axioms of science.

It has been said that 'science commits suicide when it adopts a creed.' To this we reply that science *has* its creed, though it is a negative one, whilst it receives in faith many of its most important hypotheses. However, it is more to the purpose to maintain that it would be suicidal to aim at the extinction of all those spiritual yearnings which are part of ourselves, and rashly to relinquish those religious ideas which may safely be taken as at least affording a provisional solution of the problems which turn up in our minds with constant persistency. It would be suicidal to the highest interests of humanity to give up the search after truth where our curiosity is most deeply roused, and where perforce the oracles of science are dumb to our inquiry. At all events, it is both unscientific and unphilosophical to take one's stand in the centre of the circle of all the sciences, bounded by the penumbra of the so-called Unknown, and to

Spiritual  
yearnings  
require to be  
satisfied.

say, Here I take my stand, and I cannot and I will not go further ; this is enough for me, even though the greater part of the world remain unsatisfied without further search into those deep things of God, the soul, and immortality.

We do not deny that the science of theology may stand in need of a better adaptation to modern modes of thought. On the other hand, we are bound to affirm that the modern triumphs of science are incapable of satisfying the inmost needs of rational and moral beings like ourselves. Without that provisional unification and interpretation of known or partly apprehended phenomena which religion supplies, the mind, like Matthew Arnold's Sappho,—

Theology and science have each a plan of their own.

‘ Looks languidly round on a gloom-buried world,’

in which, as he says elsewhere,—

‘ Dreams dawn and fly, friends sink and die,

Like spring flowers ;

Our vaunted life is one long funeral,

Men dig graves with bitter tears

For their dead hopes ; and, all

Mazed with doubts and sick with fears,

Count the hours.’ (*A Question to Fausta.*)

Let a man once believe in a Supreme Reason, and he will be able cheerfully to perform his task in life, finding in its possession the main-spring of human effort and elevated hope. If it be true what Buckle says of the discoveries of great men, that ‘ they never leave us ; they

And find their complement and reconciliation in the Supreme Reason.

Faith as a  
guide in the  
discovery of  
truth.

‘are immortal; they contain those eternal truths  
‘which survive the shock of empires, outlive the  
‘struggle of rival creeds, and witness the decay  
‘of perennial religions,’ it cannot be denied that  
the discoverers of religious truth have done  
much in establishing those eternal verities which  
raise the mind of man above the base facts of  
life, which shed the rays of a better hope into  
human hearts, which promise the help of a  
Higher Power to the noblest efforts of mankind.  
They have thus brought about spiritual results in  
the saint, the martyr, and the Christian philan-  
thropist, before which those that have followed  
upon the discoveries of science and travel fade  
into comparative insignificance. Following their  
lead in the venture of faith, we may take up the  
words of one of the noblest of them, whose in-  
tellect was equal at least to his spiritual in-  
sight,—words addressed to the Athenian wor-  
shippers of an ‘Unknown God,’ and remind our  
modern philosophers of the duty ‘that they  
‘should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel  
‘after Him, and find Him, though He be not  
‘far from every one of us: for in Him we live,  
‘and move, and have our being’ (Acts xvii.  
27, 28).

# NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS;

THEIR STATE AND PROSPECTS.

BY THE

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THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

56 PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

## Argument.

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THE following tract deals with the non-Christian religions that still exist. It glances very briefly at the past history of each of the great Pagan creeds, dwells more fully on their present condition, and endeavours to form some estimate of their probable future.

Animism or spirit-worship is the most extensively diffused of these religions. It is vague and indefinite, having few fixed beliefs or rites. It gives way before any definite system. Great have been the triumphs over it, of the Gospel in particular.

Zoroastrianism is now professed only by a few. Morally it stands very high among Pagan creeds. Conversions from it have not been numerous.

Buddhism is divided into two great schools. The Southern school is the nearer to original Buddhism. It is materialistic and atheistic. Its theoretic morality is pure, but very ascetic. Northern Buddhism believes in a God, a soul, and a future state. Practically Buddhist morality is all but powerless. Buddhism is rather tenacious of life.

The religions of China are first the worship of Shang-ti, and next the three popular systems—Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. These three strangely commingle. Taoism runs into magic. Confucianism is little better than a moral system. The chief religious observance of China is ancestor-worship.

In Japan the religions are Shinto, Confucianism, and Buddhism. Shinto is colourless and lifeless; it has influence only as the State religion. Christianity has made much progress in Japan.

Mohammadanism is the most powerful and aggressive of non-Christian systems. It is intolerant. It sanctions slavery. It degrades woman more than any other system. Christianity makes progress among Mohammadans in Egypt, in India, and particularly in Netherlands India.

The Church of Christ requires to know far better than she does the condition of the heathen world, and the steady progress of the Gospel when faithfully proclaimed. Let her hasten to the rescue of the Christless nations!



# NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS; THEIR STATE AND PROSPECTS.

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## INTRODUCTION.



IN the series of Present Day Tracts, No. 51 is entitled 'Ancient Paganism and Christianity.' It contains an outline of the chief religious systems which were flourishing when the Christian faith arose, but have since entirely passed away. For none of them does resurrection seem possible. Amun Ra is forgotten at Egyptian Thebes, and 'cloud-compelling Zeus' will never regain his throne on 'the snowy top of cold Olympus.'

Some religions have perished.

But all the Pagan systems of faith that existed two thousand years ago have not passed away. The ancient non-Christian creeds which still survive are found chiefly in the Farther East. It is only in modern days that these have come into close contact with Christianity; and we must try to form some estimate of the results, present and prospective, of that contact.

Others still living.

One of the creeds of which we have to speak

is younger than Christianity itself, and is, all things considered, its most formidable opponent.

Ought to be  
studied.

An acquaintance with non-Christian systems of belief ought to be regarded as an essential part of a liberal education, at least of those who are trained for the Christian ministry. The history of battles and sieges has its value; a record of political and social movements is still more useful; but unless we know a nation's religion we remain ignorant of its deeper soul.

To Christians, an acquaintance with the great Pagan systems still existing is necessary for a still higher reason. Essentially, the Church of Christ is militant. She is bound to put forth her highest energies to bring the world in subjection to the feet of Christ. Her weapons, as the apostle says, are 'mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.' But if she would war wisely, she must know what and where those strongholds are, and how they can best be assailed.

Have to be  
regarded.

While we speak thus we ought to state more fully the belief we hold in reference to non-Christian systems. We do not regard them as masses of unmitigated falsehood. Such a position was frequently taken by Christian writers down to a comparatively recent date. Even Milton spoke of the Pagan creeds as the work of fallen angels, and as having 'devils to adore for deities.' Of late years most writers have earnestly sought to point out all that is good in these creeds, and some, indeed, to cast a veil over what is evil. The great Apostle of the Gentiles held the golden

mean between two dangerous extremes. He tells us that 'the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead;' and that 'the Gentiles who have not the [written] law are a law unto themselves.' The apostle, then, fully admits the existence of what we call 'the light of nature.'<sup>1</sup> But no man had a profounder conviction than St. Paul of the corruption of the heathen systems, and the unhappiness of their professors.

Not mere  
falsehood.

This is not a tract on what is usually called Comparative Religion. We do not intend to compare the various religions with each other, or with Christianity. We shall do our best to describe their present state and prospects. It is not so much an estimate of their moral worth that we seek to form, as an estimate of their strength and stability, and of the probability of their advancing or receding. Many interesting questions naturally suggest themselves as to the origin of the various creeds, their mutual connections, and so on; but our limits will, for the most part, compel us to avoid the discussion of such matters. We must limit ourselves to great acknowledged facts.

Our object.

It is obvious that within the space allotted us we can give no full account of any one religion.

<sup>1</sup> It seems doubtful, however, whether he had in his view the darker forms of demon-worship. There are great diversities among Pagan systems. The description in Romans, chap. i., seems to apply especially to the Greek, Roman, and Egyptian religions.

A volume, nay, volumes, might be devoted to the consideration of each separate faith without at all exhausting the subject. Most readers, we apprehend, get wearied with the multitude of details submitted to them when any creed is elaborately discussed. But we believe it possible to present an outline of each system which, if it be clearly and correctly drawn, will, to most readers, be of considerable interest and service.

The leading forms of Pagan faith that still exist are the following :—Animism, or spirit-worship ; Hinduism ; Buddhism ; Zoroastrianism ; the religions of China and Japan ; and Mohammadanism.

We begin with the consideration of

### I. ANIMISM, OR SPIRIT-WORSHIP.

Animism.

The name of Shamanism is often used as synonymous with this, although more properly applied to the faith of the Turanian races in Middle and Northern Asia.

Very widely  
diffused.

Spirit-worship is very widely spread. It is the chief religion of Asia, especially of the Tartar races, except where Buddhism, Mohammadanism, and to some extent Christianity have modified or supplanted it. It is the religion of all Africa, except where Mohammadanism and Christianity have come in. It was, and largely is, the religion of the Indian tribes of America. It once prevailed over all the multitudinous islands of Polynesia. But even in countries which are generally supposed to have adopted

other forms of belief, Animism still remains. It is, at best, concealed, not conquered; and, as geologists would say, it is perpetually *cropping out*. So is it, for example, in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam. In India there are more than nine millions of spirit-worshippers. As spirit-worship is diffused amidst so vast a multitude of races the differences characterising it in belief and practice must of course be great. Is it possible to generalise when the facts appear infinite in number? Yes, it seems possible to state briefly the generic features of Animism, although at first sight the diversities do appear numberless.

The most distinctive characteristics of Animism are the following :—

1. A being superior to all others is acknowledged. His abode is almost always the sky, sometimes the sun. He is acknowledged, but scarcely worshipped. Yet a sense of responsibility to this dim being is seldom wholly wanting. He is wrapped in mystery; but any reference to him excites a feeling of awe.

*Its leading features.*

2. While the existence of this great being is admitted, the mind turns continually to the presence and potency of spirits which are distinct from him. These control the affairs of the world. This belief is definite and universal.

Spirits are believed to be everywhere. There are spirits of the waters, of the mountains, of the plains, of the woods, of the house, even of the fire. The Animist might say with Milton,

‘Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.’

But, alas ! how different in character and employment are the 'spiritual creatures' believed in by the Animist from those of which the poet thought!<sup>1</sup> For they are all, or almost all, malevolent demons—veritable fiends.

Then the ghosts of the dead must be added to the grisly company. And all these beings are powerful, jealous, sensitive, revengeful. They stand upon their rights ; and woe to the unhappy wretch who, through design or accident, fails to pay them due respect ! Moral character matters not ; it is homage they demand.

Its origin.

We said we would confine ourselves to facts, eschewing mere speculation. Yet, as one thinks of a religion like this, he is compelled to ask, How is it possible that our unhappy fellow-men have fallen into such dreadful conceptions as these ? We believe they may be traced chiefly to the influence of environment. The struggle for existence, on the part of the uncivilised man, is hard. Even in India it is so. Devastating floods, blighting droughts, whirlwinds, pestilences, wild beasts and wilder men : whence come these trials ? Not from the great Being whose dwelling is far off in the sky. Why does He permit them ? Ah ! who can say ?

3. But, at all events, the beings who inflict such misery must be propitiated. Bloody offerings are presented to them. In India, at

<sup>1</sup> 'Sole, or responsive each to other's note,  
Singing their great Creator.'

least, these consist of goats, cocks, and chickens. The usual place of sacrifice is a sacred grove just outside the village.

4. Wild dances are performed in their honour. Its rites.  
There is no regular priesthood; some person—either man or woman—is selected to enact the leading part. A suitable dress is put on, many-coloured, with abundance of small bells suspended from it. Drums, horns, clarionets, cymbals, are introduced; bells, too, bells of all sizes, till there is a frightful discord, enough to content the most exacting demon. The dance at first is slow; but the performer drinks intoxicating draughts, lashes himself with a whip till the blood is flowing down, or drinks the blood of a decapitated kid.<sup>1</sup> His eyes now seem starting from their sockets; he whirls wildly round and round till he sinks exhausted on the ground. Now the demon has possession of him; he is *inspired*. Questions are showered on him: ‘Who stole my cow?’ ‘Who made my child sick?’ and so on. He grunts out some kind of answer.

These terrible orgies are usually celebrated during the night. The sacred stillness of nature is suddenly broken in upon by a hideous uproar—the beating of drums, the clashing of cymbals, the braying of horns; it seems as if Pandemonium had broken loose; while the stars of heaven, with their large, calm, lustrous eyes, look down in pitying wonder on the horrible confusion.

<sup>1</sup> Even in Bombay, in our time, on one occasion the man plunged his teeth into the neck of a live kid, and drank the blood of the tortured, writhing creature.



*Possession.*

This is *possession*, when sought and expected. But it is believed to take place in cases innumerable when it is neither sought nor perhaps expected. Human beings of both sexes and all ages are exposed to the invasion of the demons. Perhaps the infliction occurs more frequently in India and China than elsewhere. The phenomena of inflication are truly remarkable. The normal personality is lost in an alien one, which usually exhibits traits of character entirely new. The attack may be short or long, violent or mild. When it passes away the sufferer returns to the normal state, and has no remembrance of what occurred during the attack.

There are traditional modes of exorcism; and if these fail, a sound drubbing with shoe, or broom, or stick is generally successful, especially if accompanied with torrents of foul abuse. The demon declares the reason of his coming, demands some offering, and departs. Whatever may be the explanation of these extraordinary manifestations, they do not often seem traceable to conscious deception. Almost always the sufferer believes that a foreign being has entered into him, against whom it is vain to strive.

Many Europeans who have witnessed these sights believe that demon-possession is a reality, and no mere form of disease. If it is bold to assert this, it appears still bolder to deny it. Yet, in these days when we hear such amazing things about 'multiplex personality,' judgment

perhaps had better be deferred until science has spoken more clearly on the subject.

Great changes have taken place, especially of late, among the races whose religion is Animism. Men of higher civilisation have been pressing upon them, and in many cases dealing harshly or cruelly by them, and the poor savages have been melting away like snow in sunshine. Vices which harm the civilised are communicated to uncivilised races, and simply ruin them. Whole tribes of the Red Indians of America have disappeared, and the wasting away continues. The original inhabitants of Australia have but a miserable remnant of representatives. In like manner the population of the multitudinous isles of Polynesia seem to be doomed; and although the acceptance of Christianity retards the decay, it does not wholly arrest it. It is a solemn, touching spectacle, this dying out of nations. Whence does it arise? What does it teach?

I assume that my readers are acquainted with the advance of the Gospel among uncivilised races. Among the many changes which have marked the century, this is the most signal and beneficent. The record of it not only enters into the annals of missions, it is a significant part of the history of mankind. Let me give a few geographical names, each of which will suggest a hundred memories of conflict and victory. Greenland; the Sandwich Islands; Madagascar; New Zealand; the Society Islands; the Fiji Islands; the New Hebrides; India (the abori-

Changes  
sustained.

Examples.

gines); Uganda; Central Africa; New Guinea;—what need to speak of the vast changes wrought in these and many other regions?

There is a theory current in many quarters that moral elevation, both in individuals and communities, can be the issue only of a long, laborious process. If it were possible to go back to the beginning of this century, and survey the uncivilized regions of the earth, with all their fantastic, hideous forms of demon-worship, we should close our eyes in sheer despair of remedy or rescue—at least until ages should have passed away. But the great work of raising, as the Song of Hannah expresses it, ‘the beggar from the dunghill, and setting him among princes,’ has been achieved in the course of the century in a vast number of cases. Let one testimony out of hundreds suffice on this question—the well-known one of Charles Darwin. He said of Tahiti, ‘The lesson of the missionary is the enchanter’s wand.’ And of Terra del Fuego, after enumerating many dreadful customs, he said, ‘All these have been abolished; and dishonesty, intemperance, and licentiousness have been greatly reduced by the Gospel.’

What will the  
Church do?

With regard to the future of the Animistic races, it largely depends on the conduct of the Christian Church. If they are to be freed from the horrible nightmare that oppresses them, it can be by no effort of their own; it must be by the help of Christian missions. The Church of Christ has in her hands the war-weapons of

victory; the question is, how far she has it in her heart to use them. How long is she to allow those numbers numberless who are, in many cases, the devilish worshippers of devils to remain as they are? When will she arise in all her heaven-given might, and teach them to repeat along with herself the great words, 'Our Father who art in heaven'?

## II. HINDUISM.

In speaking of this system it is well at the outset to point out an error that seems to prevail almost universally. What we call Hinduism is not one faith; it is a vast congeries of varied, and in many cases conflicting, faiths. Mohamadanism has various forms; so has Christianity; but both of these religions possess a body of fundamental beliefs common to all their professors. It is otherwise with Hinduism.

It may be said that it is best to confine the name to the doctrines and rites inculcated in the Shastras, or sacred books. This does, to some extent, limit the meaning of the term; but vast contradictions still remain in what is called the Hindu religion. For there is no general agreement as to what the authoritative Shastras are. The usual statement is that they consist of four Vedas, six philosophical systems, and eighteen Puranas. But a work which has very powerfully affected higher Hindu thought for perhaps two thousand years—the Bhagavad Gita, or Song of

Hinduism

Its immense diversities.

the Divinity—acknowledges only three Vedas, and speaks slightly even of them. The authors of the different books are in avowed collision, denouncing one another as ‘children,’ ‘madmen,’ or ‘atheists.’ An influential Hindu gentleman, a judge in the High Court of Bombay, claims it as an honour to Hinduism that it is so ‘tolerant’ a creed. It is tolerant in this sense, that a man may believe what he pleases, and behave as he pleases, and yet stand up unimpeachably a good Hindu, *provided* he strictly obeys certain caste regulations, which relate especially to eating and drinking. He may be a monotheist, a polytheist, a pantheist, or an atheist : nay, no man has a right to challenge his position in the Hindu community, even if his religion be the grossest form of fetishism.<sup>1</sup>

Wonder and worship ; these are scarcely separable in the Hindu mind. Even so, whatever is dreaded receives the homage of fear and deprecation. For minds so constituted religion is in a state of perpetual flux. New deities come in ; old ones slowly depart.

<sup>1</sup> It may be well to explain two terms which will frequently occur, viz. idolatry and fetishism. They are often used interchangeably, yet they really differ. Idolatry is properly the worship of an idol, *i. e.* an image, a resemblance, or it may be a symbol, of something different from the idol itself, as a man’s picture or signet ring is distinguishable from the man. In this sense the worship is paid not *to* the idol so much as *through* the idol, to an unseen being whom it represents. On the other hand, a fetish is itself worshipped ; it is not a resemblance,—it is a deity. And yet idolatry, though distinguishable from fetishism, very easily runs into it. Worship is then paid *to* the image itself.

Most Hindus are at once pantheists and polytheists—a strange, unhappy combination. We need not, therefore, be surprised when we hear that it has been proposed to add the Christian Bible to the Hindu books, and hold it as equally authoritative with them. Out of the enormous repository the good Hindu would then pick and choose whatever pleased him best, and boast of the large-mindedness and liberality of his religion.<sup>1</sup> The mind of the West finds it difficult to conceive of such a religion. The sense of wonder grows when we remember that the supreme, inexorable tyrant Caste is a usurper; it was no part of original Hinduism, and it is not recognised in the Vedas, any more than idol-worship is.<sup>2</sup>

Pantheism  
united with  
polytheism.

The Vedic nature-worship has gone on steadily changing throughout successive generations. In particular it has been powerfully affected by the religions with which it has come in contact. It borrowed much from the worship of the aborigines; it drew largely from Buddhism; Mohammadanism certainly influenced it; and so most probably did early Christianity. One

Changes in  
Hinduism.

<sup>1</sup> Recently the 'Amrita buzar Patrika,' a Bengal paper of strongly conservative character, spoke thus:—'Every true Hindu is a believer in Christ also. In the matter of devotion to Christ, Hindus and Christians are on a perfectly equal level.' The language means less than a European reader naturally supposes. The writer finds no difficulty in worshipping at once Christ and Krishna, Jehovah and Baal. But this can only be a transitional stage of thought.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry S. Maine calls caste the 'most disastrous and blighting of human institutions.' Yet it is now the very soul of Hinduism.

might call it omnivorous. What it absorbs, it but partially assimilates; and hence Hinduism has become so full of contradictions. The philosopher Hegel characterised the Hindu mind as *maaslos*—measureless; but that is not all. While subtly metaphysical, it is strangely illogical; it lacks all sense of coherence and harmony in thought. A recent proof of this was supplied by that very interesting man, Keshub Chunder Sen. His contention towards the end of his life was this: ‘Asia is the mother of religions; to form the religion of the future we must simply take the various Asiatic creeds and fuse them into one great chemical compound.’ It is impossible to conceive a surer way of realising the horrible confusion of the poet’s dream of Chaos.

This vast amorphous mass has gone on for many generations changing, but changing to the worse. Foreign influences, such as the Jewish colony at Cochin, and the interesting body of Syrian Christians near them, affected slightly the inhabitants of the South. Then about A.D. 1000 broke in the Musulmans from the north, sternly iconoclastic, bitter persecutors as a rule, and fully accepting the principle which Mahmud of Ghazni was taught by his prime minister, namely, that ‘it is not needful to have mercy on a Pagan idolater.’ The followers of Islam are now rather more than a sixth of the inhabitants of India,—which is not a large proportion, considering the means adopted to proselytise, and the long duration of the effort.



In the end of the fifteenth century the Portuguese arrived in India by the Cape of Good Hope. As their great poet Camões expresses it, their object was the extension of 'the faith and the empire' (a fê e o imperio). The Portuguese warriors were animated by the spirit of the Crusaders; many of them were brave to excess, but they were equally cruel, and 'the rage of the Feringhi'<sup>1</sup> became proverbial. Little real progress was made in the conversion of the natives. The greatest of the missionaries, Francisco Xavier, was bitterly disappointed with the results of the labours of himself and others. This need not surprise us; he was a man of 'proud precipitance of soul,' who expected to sow the seed to-day, and reap the golden harvest to-morrow. There were many other Romish missionaries, patient labourers, doubtless, many of them; but the establishment of the Inquisition at Goa in 1560 ruined every hope of the Portuguese, whether political, commercial, or religious. Hieronymo Xavier, the nephew of Francisco, had influence at the court of the emperors Akbar and Jehangir, but no considerable results flowed from it. There are at the present day, in Bombay and elsewhere, Portuguese gentlemen of education; but the community has sunk to the level of the lower Hindus, and it exerts no influence on Hinduism.

During the last hundred years the steady progress of British power in India has not

<sup>1</sup> A corruption of the word *Frank*.

been in all cases helpful in respect of religious change. The conquest of Bengal by Clive irritated the Mohammadans. Before the beginning of this century the Marathas had become the paramount power in India; and their plundering horsemen swept irresistibly over the land from Agra to Tanjore. Their power was finally crushed in 1817. The Peshwa, the head of the great confederacy, was a Brahman; and Brahmans had been pampered wherever the Maratha power extended. Suddenly the Brahman was reduced to the level of a common man; he received no patronage or pension on the ground of being an 'earth-god.' Human nature being what it is, this naturally aroused feelings of the deepest resentment. The victorious foreigner was hated; his sway, his habits, his religion, were all alike detestable.

But men were led to think in spite of themselves. Everything compelled it; for ours, as FitzJames Stephen said, is 'a belligerent civilisation.' The British government, based on the principle of rendering equal justice to men of all classes and creeds, was a striking novelty. Was it right? If so, what of the past? Had the administration of India, alike by Hindu and Mohammadan, been a blunder? New thoughts arose; strange questions pressed on earnest minds. Above all, what about religion?

Hindu  
Reformers.

The first who, in recent times, stood prominent as a reformer was Rammohun Roy, a Brahman of Bengal, a man of inquisitive mind and con-

siderable thinking power. He was born in 1774. The strongly monotheistic and anti-idolatrous teaching of Islam impressed him, and at the age of sixteen he wrote a tract against image-worship. He studied Buddhism. By-and-by he learned English, and mingled in English society. His dislike of popular Hinduism steadily increased, but the higher philosophy of the Brahmans was greatly to his mind. Ere long he came to Calcutta, where he gathered many congenial spirits round him; and a society for the investigation of spiritual truth was formed in 1816. In 1820 he published in Bengali and English a work entitled *The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*. He was an eclectic, and gleaned what he thought true from the books of all the great religions; but Christ he fully regarded as the greatest, wisest, and holiest of teachers. Occasionally he used language which implied very high views of the person of Christ; but possibly his opinions on that great question may have fluctuated from time to time. His influence among his countrymen was deservedly great. He died in 1833 in England, to which he had proceeded as Commissioner of the Emperor of Delhi.

Rammohun  
Roy.

The death of Rammohun Roy was a great loss to the cause of religious reform, and especially to the society which he had established, the Brähma Samāj. But in 1841 Debendranath Tagore joined it, and gave it a definite constitution, the members binding themselves to abstain from polytheistic and idolatrous worship.

Brähma  
Samāj.

Keshub  
Chunder Sen.

Keshub Chunder Sen became a member in 1841. He had come much in contact with European and Christian thought. He was eager for more rapid reforms than Debendranath deemed necessary; and in 1866 he and his friends formed a new society, which they called the Brāhma Samāj of India. Ardent, self-reliant, uncontrollable, Keshub advocated important changes, such as the neglect of caste, and sought a great reformation in the worship of ancestors. Women, too, were allowed to be present at the services. A Marriage Act was passed for his followers; the lowest legal age for the bridegroom was fixed at eighteen, that of the bride at fourteen—an immense improvement on the terribly general custom of child-marriage. In 1878 a split took place; many of Keshub's followers left him. He vehemently denounced them; but their secession left him free to move as he pleased. He now called his society the 'New Dispensation,' of which he was the head, and in which all other religions were to merge. He began to utter strangely mystical ideas, and to set up one symbolical institution after another. Ritualism he carried very far, and the inevitable result would have followed—a weakening of the intellectual and moral portion of the system. Of the strange jumble which he expected the religion of the future to become, we have already spoken. But let us remember that Keshub always spoke of Christ in terms of the highest admiration, although the Being he conceived worthy of

Split in the  
Samāj.

worship was Christ with the addition of the attributes of a Hindu ascetic. This remarkable man died in January, 1884.

A large number of societies, closely resembling the Brāhma Samāj, soon sprang up in Bengal and other parts of India. The members were almost exclusively young men fairly acquainted with English and were readers of English books. But the religious agitation extended into a class which had no desire to adopt Christianity, and yet clearly saw that traditional Hinduism was indefensible. The Arya Samāj arose, under the influence of a Gujarati Brahman who took the name of Dayanand Sarasvati. He swept away at a stroke more than three-fourths of the accredited Hindu Shāstras, retaining the four Vedas, the inspiration of which he maintained to be 'self-evident.' By an arbitrary mode of translation which no Sanskrit scholar could accept, he made out the Vedas to be strictly monotheistic. With far more reason he asserted that they did not countenance image-worship, nor caste, nor child-marriages, nor suttee; so that he was, to a certain extent, really a reformer.

Among those who dislike Christianity, but yet see that Hinduism must either be mended or ended, the Arya Samāj is popular, at least in Northern India.

Meanwhile, the spiritual unrest of the Hindus goes on increasing. It does so chiefly, but not exclusively, among those whom education brings

Arya Samāj.

Spiritual  
unrest in  
India.

into contact with European thought. Education and Missions—these are telling more powerfully every day. The education in Government schools and colleges is strictly secular. It acts as a solvent on the native creed; and in the higher institutions of Government not one in a hundred has any real belief in popular Hinduism.

Christianity  
and  
Hinduism.

Christian Missions, all the while, have been steadily extending. Converts from the aborigines and the 'casteless Hindus' (if that expression be allowable) are especially numerous; but the influence of Christian truth extends far beyond the circle of the baptized. As education increases, more and more good is effected through the press. Mission colleges are achieving a work of the highest conceivable value in diffusing Christian thought in the educated mind. Probably, for one who is technically called a convert there are ten convinced that Christianity will conquer; and most of these believe that it deserves to conquer. The Christian converts are steadily rising in position and influence; and in a generation or so they will be, in many parts of India, the men of light and leading, at once true to the cause of Christ and to the cause of India.<sup>1</sup> Many complain that the progress of the Gospel is slow. It is far more rapid than it was among the Greeks and Romans in the first two centuries. Let us remember the words

<sup>1</sup> In the Madras Presidency, in which Missions have been longest at work, the Christians are a fortieth of the population; but they furnish a twelfth of the graduates.

of Canon Liddon: 'Long before the Roman empire was Christian, the air, so to speak, was filled with Christian ideas. The Christian creed was discussed and rediscussed by those who did not yet hold it; and, while stray conversions took place in all ranks of life, the mass of the people remained apparently attached to the old Paganism. In the middle of the third century not more than one-twentieth part was Christian.<sup>1</sup> In the next century the conversions came with a rush.' Not a few are expecting them to come with a rush in India even in our day. It is possible. When the time arrives, we shall probably see great mass movements; in the meantime we are content to work on in confident expectation. And when we compare the state of things in India with that in the Roman empire, let us remember that, at the conversion of Constantine, the population of the latter was only one hundred and twenty millions, whereas that of India already touches three hundred millions, and is steadily increasing. Silent as gravitation, and equally pervasive, is the power that is drawing this immense host of human beings upward. The history of the world presents no spectacle of greater or equal sublimity. Would that our country recognised far more fully not merely the grandeur of her dominion in that Eastern world, but the thrice solemn responsibility which her high position involves!

Prospects of  
Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon held that the Christians were only six millions at the conversion of Constantine.



## III. ZOROASTRIANISM OR PARSIISM.

Zoroastrian-  
ism.

We now speak of Zoroastrianism. A consideration of it naturally succeeds a statement regarding Hinduism. The two religions must have been originally the same, or at least derived from the same source. But the one at an early date parted into two. There may have been opposition between the races holding these creeds respectively, and this would render an explanation of their divergences more easy. At all events, each branch of the stream pursued its independent course. The more western became gradually purer, but in the lapse of ages has been reduced to a petty rill; the eastern, fed by many tributaries, some of them bearing very impure elements, has gone on broadening and deepening into the abnormal, enormous flood of Hinduism. The entire number of Zoroastrians in the world scarcely exceeds a hundred thousand. The professors of Hinduism may be reckoned about two hundred millions.

Its origin.

Zoroastrianism is so called because its professors trace it up to the famous Zoroaster. Of this man's true history we know next to nothing. The accounts regarding him are conflicting, and cannot be harmonised. Hence some have concluded that Zoroaster (in Zend Zarathushtra) is a title, and not a personal name; and they go on to reckon up six or even eight Zoroasters. In that case we must restrict the name to a

distinguished man who appeared, probably in Media, somewhere about 600 B.C. The Medes, an Aryan race, had been under the dominion of the Assyrians, but threw off the foreign yoke about the middle of the seventh century B.C. The foreign elements which, during their subjection, had been introduced into their religion, they would also strive to cast off; patriotism would insist on this. The leader in this revolution we may take to have been the great, or perhaps we should say the greatest, Zoroaster.

Zoroastrianism early became the religion of the kings of Persia. It is not probable that the great Cyrus was a Zoroastrian; he was a statesman, tolerant of the various religions prevailing among his subjects. But the language of the inscriptions of Darius Hystaspis is Zoroastrian so far as it goes. The enactments of the sacred books seem to have been by no means rigorously followed; but probably the power of the priests went on steadily increasing up to the Macedonian invasion, three centuries B.C. The Parsi writers represent Alexander—‘the cursed Sikandar’—as a persecutor who burnt their sacred books. If so, it must have been from political, not religious motives; probably he was irritated by the enmity of the priests to his dominion.

Became the  
religion of  
Persia.

Greeks.

The Greek successors of Alexander ruled Persia for eighty years. Then came one of those revolutions of which we have several instances in history, when the Asiatic broke in pieces the European yoke. The Parthian

Parthians.

dominion succeeded the Greek. Zoroastrianism on the whole languished; for the Parthian princes, though opposed to Greek dominion, had no dislike of the foreigner, and in some cases called themselves 'lovers of the Greeks.' One of them, however, set himself to collect the scattered fragments of the Zoroastrian books.

Second  
Persian  
empire.

Early in the third century before Christ the Persian kingdom was restored by Ardashir (called by the Greeks and Romans Artaxerxes). He sought to bind his subjects firmly together by reviving the ancient faith of Persia. The collection of all remaining fragments of the ancient books was earnestly gone about, but with more zeal than discrimination, if we may judge from the Parsi accounts of the means adopted. Revision took place at least three times during the kings who succeeded. The Avesta (the sacred book) is, as Haug expressed it, 'fragmentary and chaotic.' Morally it stands high. It is often childish, never impure.

Its  
intolerance.

The second Persian empire played an important part in history, and contended sometimes successfully with the Roman empire. It lasted more than four hundred years. Christianity had early obtained a footing in Persia; the 'Parthians, Medes, and Elamites,' we may believe, brought it back from Jerusalem. Zoroastrianism was sternly intolerant; Saporess (Shapur II.) was as cruel a persecutor as Decius or Diocletian, and Persia added not a few to 'the noble army of martyrs.' The Persians also warred against

the neighbouring nation of Armenia because it had become Christian; and they behaved with great cruelty in their wars. Then there arose an enemy from an unexpected quarter: the irresistible Arabs rushed in with their war-cry of 'God and the Prophet,' and the wealth of Persia lay at the feet of the desert robbers. Zoroastrianism succumbed; we scarcely hear of martyrs. Ere long the entire realm 'from Shiraz to Samarcand' accepted the religion of the conqueror. Only a small remnant clung to their ancestral faith, and most of these by degrees found their way to India. In Persia itself only about eight thousand Zoroastrians now remain; they are sorely oppressed, and seem slowly dying out.

Arabs  
conquer  
Persia.

The theology of the Avesta is no harmonious system. In one place we have an imperfect monotheism; in another, decided dualism; in a third, a worship of natural objects which, constructively, is polytheism. But the Parsis, or at all events the educated among them, have risen above the teachings of their sacred books. They claim to be monotheists; not long ago a Parsi high-priest declared that the attributes of Ahuramazda are the same as those ascribed in the Old Testament to Jehovah. Even so, instead of believing in two principles or powers—one good and one evil—both of them existing from eternity and both creators,—the Parsi speaks of the relation between good and evil—God and Satan—exactly, or almost exactly, as a Christian

Theology of  
Avesta not  
self-  
consistent.

or Mohammadan would speak. Of the ritual, part is very coarse, and is with increasing difficulty tolerated by the younger members of the community. In the meantime the Parsis are steadily growing in intelligence. Education, even the education of women, is widely diffused. Many Parsi ladies are equal in point of education and refinement to their sisters in Europe. They read European books, and imbibe European sentiments. One naturally asks why such a community does not become Christian. The truth is, they adhere to the Avesta chiefly from a patriotic feeling. The book is for the most part exceedingly dull and commonplace; the only tolerable part is the Gathas, or songs, in which Zoroaster, or some one in his name, pours forth his complaints against idol-worshippers; there is very little to enlighten the mind or move the heart. Zoroaster himself is but a shadow. The contrast between the dreary talk of the Avesta and the bright pictures of Oriental life in the Old Testament is unspeakable; and there is nothing that bears the remotest resemblance to the touching Gospel narrative. Yet this was their fathers' book, and they cling to it with pathetic fondness. The splendour of their ancient monarchy has for ever been extinguished; they are exiles; and to return to their fatherland would be to barter liberty and honour for slavery and scorn. They are like some noble family now stripped of all its former possessions, but fondly cherishing

The Gathas.

The Avesta  
a dull book.

some heirloom that reminds it of the dear, irrevocable past. Even so the Parsis cherish the Avesta as a precious relic—all that remains of the glory of the great empire which once reached ‘from India even unto Ethiopia, over a hundred and seven and twenty provinces.’<sup>1</sup> The feeling is very natural, and it has nothing mean or sordid in it. Nevertheless sentiment is one thing, and conscience is another. A few Parsis (in all about twenty-five) have entered the Church of Christ; and as light increases more and more will do so. More and more will say with the apostle, ‘What things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ.’ We do not look for a rapid conversion of the Parsi community; they will probably go on adding the teachings of Christianity to the sadly defective doctrines of the Avesta, until they unexpectedly find that, while nominally Zoroastrian, they are really Christian in belief. Parsiism will then begin to melt away. Or, let us rather say that, even as the morning star delights to hide itself in the beams of the rising sun, so the ‘golden star’<sup>2</sup> of Zoroastrianism—which has shed a measure of light in days gone by—will not indeed be extinguished, but will merge and disappear in the unclouded radiance of the Sun of Righteousness.

Prospects of  
change.

<sup>1</sup> See the Book of Esther, i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Such is one rendering of the difficult name Zarathushtra.

## IV. BUDDHISM.

**Buddhism.** Much has been written on the subject of Buddhism, but there is no religion regarding which more contradictory views have been expressed. There is nothing like general agreement as to its character, its history, or the number of its followers. We can hardly wonder at this. Its early history is covered with darkness. It has assumed different shapes in different countries. It has in most places become so mixed with other systems that it is exceedingly difficult to say who are Buddhists proper and who are not.

**Number of its professors.** The flattest contradiction is regarding the number of its professors. We find it sometimes stated that these amount to four or even five hundred millions. In this estimate the whole population of China, Korea, and Japan must have been reckoned Buddhists; but this is a most erroneous supposition. On the other hand, Sir M. Monier Williams holds the number of Buddhists proper as 'not less than a hundred millions.' We should be disposed to put the figures somewhat higher; but in the countries in which it prevails the statistics are far from trustworthy. Dr. Happer, long a missionary in China, and a diligent student of Buddhism, informed us that he reckoned the Chinese Buddhists at seventy-five millions.

The literature of the religion is of immense



extent, existing in ten different languages, viz. Pali, Sanskrit, Singhalese, Burmese, Siamese, Tibetan, Chinese, Mongolian, Manchu, and Japanese. The books fall into two great classes. The first class includes those of the southern countries—Ceylon, Burma, and Siam; the second those of the northern—Nepal, Kashmir, Tibet, China, Mongolia, and Japan.

The difference between the northern and southern books is exceedingly great. They exhibit, in fact, two different religions. Original Buddhism has its best representative in the southern school; though Buddha, were he to rise up again, would not acknowledge it as holding the faith he preached.

But who was Buddha? Scholars of high name have doubted his existence.<sup>1</sup> On the whole, however, the balance of probabilities is in favour of the common opinion. He was born—if we assume his actual existence—in Northern India, probably towards the close of the sixth century before Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The term Buddha is an appellative, and means 'the enlightened one.' His proper name is said to have been Siddhārtha, and his family name Gautama (or Gotama). All the tales about his early life are untrustworthy. The earliest account<sup>3</sup> was written long after his death, and is regarded by modern criticism as a

<sup>1</sup> As H. H. Wilson, Wassiljew, Senart, and Kern.

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese accounts carry us centuries farther back.

<sup>3</sup> The Lalita Vistara.

farrago of silly legends; and later works are, of course, of still less authority. Thus, though we can speak with a measure of confidence about early Buddhism, we know next to nothing about Buddha himself.

Let us, however, attend to the doctrine; and first to that of the southern school.

Tenets of  
southern  
school.

It acknowledges no God. Perishable beings called *devas*, or gods, it does recognise, but no Creator or Ruler of the universe. It acknowledges no soul; man is composed of five elements, which are separated at death and then enter into new combinations.

There is also *karma* connected with every man. The word means *deed, work*; it denotes what a man has done—his conduct, and good or ill desert. It is equivalent to merit or demerit. Now this is not fugitive; it remains. Merit must be rewarded; demerit must be punished. But how, when the person it belonged to is no more? On the death of one being another being is formed, to which the karma is transferred, and which enjoys or suffers in consequence. Transmigration is no tenet of southern Buddhism; there is no soul to transmigrate.

Farther, existence is suffering. The cause of suffering is desire. Therefore desire must be extinguished. The way to do so is to accept Buddha's law. The salvation the Buddhist seeks is *nirwāna*—cessation of personal existence.

Such were the main tenets of original Buddhism. They do not seem attractive; yet

Buddha's preaching drew large numbers. One great reason of this was the character of the preacher. He was a man of very tender heart, and proclaimed to high and low a 'law of kindness.' To all but the Brahmans the gods had become dim, distant, unapproachable; moreover, the towering arrogance of the priests was, alike to prince and peasant, unendurable; and to admire and love this gentlest of teachers was a new sentiment. He seemed more than mortal. As one of our best Orientalists<sup>1</sup> expresses it, Buddhism 'first gave India a sense of the inner delights of devotion.' And so ere long, Buddha, who believed in no God, himself received worship. For man is born to worship.

The great excellence of Buddhism lies in its morality. Of course, it has nothing corresponding to the first table of the decalogue; but its five fundamental precepts have been compared to those of the second table. They forbid murder, adultery, stealing, lying, and intoxication. But certainly Buddha, or the earlier Buddhists, interpreted these commandments in a strongly ascetic way; and ere long the sense imputed to them was utterly extravagant. Thus in regard to murder: all life is sacred. Kill a tiger, a serpent, or a mosquito, and you are a murderer. So in regard to intoxication: drink a glass of wine, and you are a drunkard; taste a single drop, and you are so. These precepts, thus understood, were binding

Buddhist  
morality.

<sup>1</sup> Barth.

on the outer circle—the lay brethren. For the inner circle there was a far stricter rule. No man could attain salvation—*i. e.* *nirwāna*—unless he entered the inner circle, abandoned all family ties, and became a monk, a mendicant brother. Women in like manner must become nuns if they sought final emancipation.

Original Buddhism has its best modern representative in Ceylon,<sup>1</sup> but even there the popular faith is really spirit-worship, *i. e.* demon-worship, with a thin veil of Buddhistic forms. This spirit-worship is still more prevalent in Burma and Siam. The priests, if they do not countenance, fully tolerate this superstition.

It has been mentioned that the northern school introduced new scriptures. In most cases the religion became more corrupt. It mixed with debased Hindu beliefs, such as that of the abominable Tantras, which Hindu orthodoxy does not acknowledge. Many of the added books are full of magical formulæ, and (still worse) vile impurities.<sup>2</sup>

But it would be wrong to pass a summary sentence of condemnation on the whole northern school. It is not wanting in certain elements of good, at least in China and Japan. We have seen that the necessities of the human heart turned Buddha into a god, and commemoration

A heaven  
believed in  
by Chinese  
and  
Japanese.

<sup>1</sup> Sir M. Monier Williams describes one of the 'devil-dances' which he saw in Ceylon. See 'Buddhism,' p. 217. A devilish dance certainly.

<sup>2</sup> Even the vast patience of Burnouf was quite worn out by the absurdity and uncleanness of the books he was examining.

into worship. But Buddha had passed away; and of the great teacher there remained only a sweet, sad memory. The heart craved for something present. By-and-by—probably not till after centuries—images of Buddha were erected, and these were worshipped. Elaborate contrivances were introduced to give the images the appearance of life; they moved their hands, their eyes, or their lips. Very early had come relic-worship; Buddha's teeth and hair and nails were cherished as most sacred things.

All this partially satisfied the cravings of the heart; but as Buddha was only one of a long succession of teachers—the fourth of the present age—the question necessarily presented itself, who and where is the next to come? The fifth of this age is to be Maitreya (*i.e.* full of friendliness). He is at present a Bodhi-sattva (a being whose essence is knowledge), dwelling in a remote heaven, who, when the doctrine of Buddha shall have faded away, will come to restore it.

Maitreya  
expected.

The northern school was not satisfied with one Bodhi-sattva. Of new ones introduced, Avalokiteśvara (the Lord who looks down) became especially famous. Afterwards arose the conception of Dyāni Buddhas, ideal beings and representatives of future Buddhas. Of these the most noted is Amitābha (measureless light), from whom Avalokiteśvara is sometimes said to have proceeded. In China and Japan, in place of the chilling doctrine of Nirwāna or

Amitābha  
and  
Avalokiteś-  
vara.

extinction, there has come in the idea of 'the peaceful land in the west.' Amitābha presides over it. All who call on him for succour will at death be conveyed to this blissful region. They will live there for millions of years, hearing the sweet singing of birds, and rejoicing in the beauty of the gardens which adorn his dwelling-place. No part of their creed is more cherished by Chinese Buddhists than this belief; yet it is an entire departure from the original Buddhist teaching. But let us add, it is not only a peaceful and happy land, but a pure land. No sin has stained it; no evil deed, word, or thought. And men may reach this paradise simply by worshipping Amitābha. Some have called this doctrine 'the creation of a sickly scholasticism;' it seems to us the inevitable rebound of the human mind from the doctrine of annihilation, or, what is even more terrible, that of a great round of transmigrations. For the northern school is not materialistic, as original Buddhism was; it believes in a soul and also in transmigration.

The Shin-shiu sect.

Closely allied to the Chinese view of Amitābha is the doctrine of a remarkable sect of Buddhists in Japan called the Shin-shiu. As explained to us by the head of a Buddhist theological college,<sup>1</sup> Amita (generally written

<sup>1</sup> This was the Rev. Akamatsu Rên-jo (so he gave his designation). He furnished us with a copy of a paper he had drawn up for Sir E. J. Reed. It is given in that writer's book on Japan, and is altogether a striking document.

Amida) is the Supreme Being. 'Amida,' said the professor, 'is the same to us as God is to you.' Much is said about salvation being obtained not by one's own efforts, but by 'help from another.' More remarkable still, even the priests may marry; and all the followers of the sect may eat flesh and fish. This is a total departure from the essential principles of Buddhism. One is disposed to think that we see in so great a revolution the influence of Christianity; but the members of the sect maintain that it arose about seven hundred years ago; whereas we do not know of Christian teachers reaching Japan before the middle of the sixteenth century.

Even so there arose a sect of Buddhists in Nepal which believed in an Adi-Buddha, that is, a primal Buddha, from whom all things proceeded, but by emanation rather than creation.

Buddhism  
in Nepal.

The most remarkable of all the divisions of Buddhism is that which flourishes in Tibet, and to a considerable extent in Mongolia. This is called Lamaism. It is the most stupendous hierarchical system the world has seen, presided over by two personages who are more than Popes, viz. the Dalai Lama, an incarnation of Avilokiteśvara, and the Pantshen Lama, an incarnation of Amitābha. All the clergy claim and receive worship. Inferior to them is a great host of gods and spirits. There are splendid monasteries; endless prayers—that is, magic formulæ; praying by machinery, *i. e.* by prayer-wheels twirled by the hand, or driven by wind

In Tibet.



or water; everywhere the great mystic words *om mani padme hum* inscribed on rocks and trees;<sup>1</sup> a most complicated ritual, bearing a wonderful resemblance to the observances of Romanism; half the population ecclesiastics, ruling autocratically, and excluding every foreign influence, political, commercial, or religious.

Quieting  
effects of  
Buddhism.

Let us be just to Buddhism. Bunsen compared it to a dose of laudanum keeping the wilder races of Asia quiet until the time of their conversion to the truth. Compare the desolating hordes that followed Gengis Khan with the present Mongols. These are utterly pacific. Would that the Turks, on issuing from their fastnesses, had accepted the teachings of Buddha instead of those of Mohammad! What infinite misery would have been spared to Asia, Africa, and Europe! But we can say little more in favour of Buddhism. James Gilmour, who seeks to point out anything that has the semblance of good in the system, speaks of the sway of the Lamas as dreadfully oppressive. The boasted moral precepts of Buddhism seem to have no power over the hearts of the people. And regarding the Lamas themselves, Gilmour's testimony is, 'The great sinners in Mongolia are the Lamas, and the great centres of wickedness are the temples.' 'The headquarters of Mongol Buddhism is Urga, where Satan's seat is.'

Yet it has  
very little  
moral power.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, *Om, the jewel in the lotus, Hum*. The reference is probably phallic. The sounds are magical.

Is Buddhism dying out? It died out in Prospects.  
India, the land of its birth, about six or seven hundred years ago. It has died out in Kashmir; it is all but dead in Nepal. Its influence in Japan has greatly lessened of late; the Government does not favour it, and Christianity tells upon it powerfully. Colonel Olcott's attempt to revive it was a failure. In China it is receding, though slowly. In the southern countries—Ceylon, Burma, and Siam—it is more tenacious of life. In Ceylon, Colonel Olcott's efforts seem to have given it a certain stimulus. The Siamese are singularly passive; too passive to oppose, too passive to accept, the Gospel; but Christian teaching is slowly revolutionizing the thought of the people. There is an old forecast that Buddha's doctrine is to perish in five thousand years from the time it was preached. We trust the date of its dissolution is much nearer than its adherents think.<sup>1</sup> It cannot co-exist with true knowledge. The 'fierce light' of modern civilisation kills it.

## V. RELIGIONS OF CHINA.

We are able to go back to very ancient times, and speak with some confidence of a remarkable Original  
faith of  
China.

<sup>1</sup> Sir M. Monier Williams has watched its position in Eastern lands. His testimony is this: 'Buddhism is gradually loosening its hold on the vast populations once loyal to its rule.' Similar is the opinion of Bishop Bigandet, an accomplished Roman Catholic missionary who laboured long in Burma.

Monotheism.

Still so far  
preserved.

worship that prevailed in China about four thousand years ago. Weighty authorities have pronounced it monotheistic. There must, clearly, have been the recognition of a supreme deity, Ti or Shang-ti, who was a personal being, and the god especially of heaven. Still more remarkable is the circumstance that the worship of Ti has come down through so many thousands of years to the present day. It has sustained some alterations, yet its essential character remains unaffected. The worship of Ti is statedly performed by the Emperor in person with all possible solemnity twice a year—at the summer and winter solstices. He worships as the representative of the Chinese people.<sup>1</sup> As such, he offers up prayer and also sacrifices which are eucharistic. He alone performs the worship at a lofty marble altar, while a great retinue of high officials and attendants is grouped around him in profound awe. This is the only State worship of China. Surely it is in every way significant and striking.

Since from of old the Emperor alone worshipped on these two annual occasions, one evil result was this,—that the people were, we may say, driven to worship other beings. These at first the State did not recognise. Almost necessarily the spirit-worship, which is so prevalent among all uncivilised and half-civilised

<sup>1</sup> Some have called the ceremony idolatrous, as being the worship of the visible heaven and earth. Prof. Legge contends earnestly and ably against this view.

races, became the religion of the Chinese people. For it is held that spirits are everywhere, and must everywhere receive homage,—spirits of every kind, especially the spirits of the dead. It soon assumed the form of ancestor-worship, which became more fixed and inveterate than in any other country. The tenacity of its hold on the Chinese may be compared to that of caste among the Hindus. This worship of ancestors is pre-eminently *the* religion of China. We are to speak of several systems of Chinese belief; but this adoration of the dead is an essential part of all. It was prescribed even by Confucius, notwithstanding his great reserve in referring to the unseen world. As enjoined by the Buddhists and Taoists it becomes a terrible bondage. The dead have enslaved the living. Prayers must be offered to ancestors; and costly gifts of various kinds, such as roasted fowls, fish, fruit, wine, must be amply provided. The Missionary Conference at Shanghai in 1890 declared that ‘idolatry is an essential constituent of ancestor-worship.’ The expense it involves to China, a very poor country, has been calculated as thirty-two millions of pounds sterling annually.<sup>1</sup>

Worship of  
the dead.

Doubtless there is something natural and beautiful in respect for the dead; but when it runs, as in China it does irrepressibly, into absolute worship—the chief worship in the empire—it is an unmitigated evil. Let us, in

Idolatrous  
and costly.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Gordon Cumming’s ‘Wanderings in China,’ i, p. 321.

passing, note the great reticence of the Christian Scriptures on the subject of the departed. How eloquent the silence, and how wise !

Three  
popular  
religions.

In addition to the venerable worship of Ti or Shang-ti there are three great systems of belief : Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. In the common Chinaman's mind these are blended together; the last two especially coalesce without difficulty. All are tolerated, and indeed supported by the Government. Intellectual and ethical principles are drawn from Confucius; Taoism supplies a host of superstitious ideas and practices; Buddhism is the main support of idolatry and stupendous ritualism. Of course, the proportions in which these systems contribute to men's belief will vary with the varying individuals.

Confucian-  
ism.

The richer classes generally, and perhaps all the officials, call themselves followers of Confucius; and most of them profess to look with contempt on the other two systems. It has been sometimes said that Confucianism is no religion, but simply an ethical system. But the great sage believed in the old traditional faith of China, and even (as we have said) in ancestor-worship; and he had no desire to wean his countrymen from it. Yet he seldom spoke of the spirits, and as seldom of the life to come. He felt and confessed his ignorance of such matters. When asked by one of his pupils about the future, Confucius replied, ' We do not know life; how then shall we know

death?' But he dwelt with elaborate fulness on duty, the duty of man to man. He discusses the various relations in which man stands to his fellows; and we may well admire the care with which he travels over the vast field of inquiry. It is seldom that either an ethical philosopher or a Christian need take exception to his doctrine. His great defect is a sadly inadequate sense of the claims of God, of the evil of sin, and of the need of pardon.

His teaching is, of course, very different from the Christian doctrine. He has been much commended because of his enunciating the 'golden rule,' 'Do not to others what you do not wish to be done to you.' Very good; but the true golden rule is Christ's; and it rises far higher: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.' The rule of Confucius amounts to this,—'Do no ill to others;' the rule of Christ, 'Do them all possible good.' The one is negative, while the other is positive.

Of Buddhism we have spoken already. Taoism.  
Just a word about Taoism. Its supposed founder was Lao-tsze, who was born fifty-four years before Confucius. Evidently he was a remarkable man. A treatise written by him, called 'Tao Teh King,' still survives. It contains a system of philosophy full of mysticism and quietism, with much which, to Western minds, is incomprehensible. Yet every now and then you catch a momentary glimpse of some deep truth; and the morality is always pure. It does not

seem fair to connect the name of this ancient sage or that of his book with the system now called Taoism. Now, it is not what it originally was. It runs into magic and the grossest absurdity ; it is fed by the superstitions of the multitude, and feeds them in return.

Prospects.

It is time to say something of the prospects of religion in China. The reader may remember that we spoke with hopefulness of the future of India, with its three hundred millions of people, and of the passing away of the 'starless night of desolation.' Would that we could use language of equal hopefulness in regard to the four hundred millions of China ! We do not despond ; a Christian dare not despond ; the servants of the 'God of hope' must be men of hope ; and the promises of Christ are 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast.' Yet, to all outward appearance, the diffusion of Christian truth in China is not very rapid. An overwhelmingly vast population, increasing by three millions annually ; multitudes engaged in a painful struggle for existence, which crushes out every upward thought ; all the upper and middle classes looking down on the 'outside barbarians' with that measureless scorn with which the refined Athenian regarded the savage Scythian ; the one national virtue of China, filial piety, perverted into the base and grinding slavery of ancestor-worship ; no education for the masses ; woman degraded, though occupying a higher place than in India ; the Chinese mind



almost destitute of the imaginative faculty, which when true religion is wanting can yet, in some degree, raise the soul above earth and earthliness;—how infinitely sad is the thought of all these things!

Nor is the catalogue of sorrows ended. All needful learning is stored up, they think, in their ancient classics; while other books are worthless, or even poisonous. Moreover, as the *Tai-ping* rebels, who inflicted enormous suffering on China, called themselves Christians, and circulated the Bible, the books of the Christians are deemed fit only for rebels and traitors. Away with them, and away—were it only possible—with the ‘foreign devils’ altogether!

Such is the feeling of the upper and middle classes generally; and the lower naturally follow in their wake, for there is no country in which the people are more strongly influenced by the wishes or conduct of their superiors. Over the educated classes, then, Confucius may be said still to hold unbroken sway; and the lower people are sunk in the depths of superstition—Taoist and Buddhistic.

Yet the Christian religion has made and is making progress. Chinese converts do not seem inferior in Christian character to those of any race; and we are aware that Chinese missionaries will hold that we have dwelt too long on what is discouraging, while there is much to encourage. Quite possibly, also, we may be entering on a new era in China. The

Progress is  
made.

Changes  
coming.

recent national humiliation must tell on all that can think. Great changes must come. Railways will gradually traverse and open up the country. Foreign trade will force itself in, and be followed by foreign arts and sciences. Western education cannot long be excluded. The example of the Japanese, hitherto despised, can hardly be despised now. Such things will certainly not make China Christian. Nevertheless they will remove serious impediments to the progress of the truth; and the determined resistance hitherto offered to it must, in the nature of things, gradually abate. In China small changes are not to be accounted small.

May we not hope that the late convulsions in the long dormant Middle Kingdom are intended to rouse it from the sleep of ages? Yes; let us trust that soon not the Emperor alone, but all his countless people with him, will ere long bend in adoration before HIM who is not only the God of heaven and earth, but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## VI. RELIGIONS OF JAPAN.

Religions of  
Japan.

The changes which have taken place in this far eastern land—changes of almost every kind—seem to us without a parallel in the history of the world. Since 1853, when Commodore Perry, to the consternation of the Japanese, sailed into the Bay of Yeddo, and induced them in 1854 to open their country to intercourse with

other nations, how amazing has been the progress! To many the advance may have seemed perilously rapid; and doubtless not a few anticipated a great reaction as all but certain. Could a nation, many of whose institutions were at best semi-barbarous, rise with a bound into the civilisation which it had taken many toilsome centuries for Europe to attain? The danger seemed especially great when the Mikado gave his people representative institutions. But the reaction has never come.

So when Japan engaged in her great struggle with China the risk appeared tremendous. Could the pigmy thrash the giant? The pigmy had indeed studied the art of war under European teaching; but could the Eastern pupil fully comprehend and successfully imitate the Western model? Yet Japan was able to do so, and did not fail in plan or execution. We do not know that any nation could have excelled her in strategy and, on the whole, discipline.

Japan's  
advance.

More wonderful still, we think, was the permission given not only to Buddhist priests, but to Christian ministers of religion, to accompany the troops. Japan also energetically carried out the resolutions of the Red Cross Society, which has done so much to mitigate the horrors of war. Every Japanese transport to Korea or China conveyed physicians and nurses, as well as soldiers, to the scene of action. Very different was her conduct when she last invaded Korea, three centuries ago; very different both to her own soldiers and the enemy.

Not less notable has been the behaviour of the Japanese since the war. They were deeply wounded by the treatment they received from certain European powers in being robbed of some of the most precious fruits of victory. But there has been no outburst of resentment; the most skilful diplomatist could not have exercised more self-control than Japan has done. She can quietly accept the inevitable.

Three  
religions.

There are three religions in Japan, which to a large extent intermingle—Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The most powerful and extensive is Buddhism.

Shinto.

Shintoism, or more properly Shinto, means 'the way of the gods' or spirits. (The word is Chinese.<sup>1</sup>) It is the original faith of Japan. As it is a form of Animism or spirit-worship, it ought in logical propriety to have been mentioned along with other forms of Animism in Part I; but the Shintoism of Japan is so very peculiar that it seems better to treat it by itself.

Its doctrines are singularly few and singularly vague. The deities (or spirits) are numberless; but nothing definite can be said about their names or functions.

Three cardinal tenets were promulgated by the Emperor in 1872. These were as follows:

1. Thou shalt honour the gods and love thy country. 2. Thou shalt understand the ordinances of heaven and the duty of man.

<sup>1</sup> The proper Japanese name *Kami no michi* has the same meaning.

3. Thou shalt reverence the Mikado and obey the will of the Court.

The Mikado or Emperor is called the direct descendant of the sun-goddess; and that he should tolerate any foreign worship is a strong proof of enlightenment. In addition to the three principles mentioned, very much stress is laid on reverence for the dead, and the worship of ancestors. Cleanliness, bodily purity, is a solemn religious duty. There is no image-worship in pure Shinto. All temples are constructed of wood. Game and fowls are offered, but not sacrificed; also fruits, vegetables, fowl, and venison. These become the perquisite of the priests. But in truth there is no prescribed form of worship as performed either at the temple or at home. The priests marry. They have no tonsure. If the ritual prescriptions are few, the moral precepts are fewer still. They think there is no need of them, on the ground that, as a Japanese authority declared, instruction is required for wicked people like the Chinese, but the Japanese have good hearts, and instinctively do all that is right. About the other world scarcely anything is said. Spirits of the dead exist, and must be worshipped; but who can tell anything more about them?

The Mikado  
the head.

Character of  
Shinto.

Shinto has one great merit; it treats women with much respect.

So imperfect a system could not possibly stand before a rival creed of any strength.

Why  
Buddhism  
spread.

Buddhism reached Japan in the sixth Christian century — the largely developed Buddhism of the northern school, with a vast array of supernatural beings, definite doctrines regarding heaven, very definite doctrines regarding hell, a great sacerdotal system, and a most dazzling ritual. Patriotic feeling pleaded on behalf of Shinto, which otherwise would have speedily been overwhelmed; but even this bulwark was thrown down when a clever Buddhist monk in the tenth century discovered that all the heroic personages of Japanese story were manifestations of Buddha, or some Bodhi-sattva. Buddhism then spread rapidly. Ere long it broke up into seven or eight great sects, the subdivisions of which can be counted up to thirty-five.

By far the most remarkable form which Buddhism has assumed in Japan is the Shinshu sect, of which we have already spoken.

The attempt made about twenty-two years ago to revive Shinto was not successful; but State patronage was withdrawn from Buddhism.

The educated men of Japan were, until of late, greatly influenced by Chinese thought, and, like the same class in China, were generally followers of Confucius, or else wholly indifferent. More recently books of the European agnostic school have been much read by the educated classes, and have exerted a wide influence.

Christian  
preaching  
only of late.

The public preaching of Christianity has been allowed in Japan only since 1873. The reception it has met with has taken the world by surprise.

Patriotic feeling is against it as a foreign faith; and patriotism in Japan easily assumes an exaggerated form. When all needful allowances are made, the diffusion of the Gospel must be called rapid. Not only Protestants, but Russians and Roman Catholics, have successful missions. There is a Protestant Church membership, exclusive of baptized children, of thirty-nine thousand.<sup>1</sup>

Some missionaries seem anxious as to the form which Christianity may assume in Japan; they dread strange experiments in polity and novelties in doctrine. Quite possibly these may come; the Japanese are vain, and their recent history has not diminished the feeling. They are impulsive. Well, if strange doctrines spring up, let us not be too much alarmed. Was it not so in the primitive Church? Did not the world, at one time, 'unexpectedly find itself Arian?' One thing is certain; Japan will not long continue in the leading-strings of Europe or America. Another thing, we think, is certain: the converts will not long allow divergent views of ecclesiastical polity to keep the sections of the Church apart, as they are in the West, in a state of armed neutrality—alas! sometimes of open hostility. *Ex oriente lux.* We do believe that light from the East will yet be shed on problems that vex the souls of many in Europe and America.

Prospects  
cheering.

<sup>1</sup> Exactly 38,710 adults in 1895.—*Missionary Herald* (American), May, 1896.



It is no ignoble hope that animates them ; and when the record of this effort comes to be written—even if it should prove a record of defeat—it may be said regarding the young Church of Japan, *Magnis tamen excidit ausis—They failed ; but it was a noble effort.*

## VII. MOHAMMADANISM.

Moham-  
madanism.

We come now to speak of Islam or Moham-madanism. The religions hitherto considered all existed before Christianity, and have come into serious conflict with it only in modern days. But Islam arose six centuries after Christ. It has during its entire history been a powerful belligerent system, and in various countries it is still extending. All other non-Christian religions are giving way more or less slowly, the Gospel gradually displacing them; Islam maintains an attitude of the sternest opposition to Christianity, and cherishes the assurance of final victory.

Mohammad,  
character.

We need not dwell on the character of Mohammad at any length. We have no difficulty in accounting for the deep interest he manifested from his youth in religious questions. At that time great discussions were frequently held on the subject. At the annual fair of Okatz it was year after year discussed with eagerness ; the venerable Qoss, the Christian Bishop of Najran, whom Mohammad had met,

frequently taking part. There was a great conflict of opinion — Heathenism, Judaism, Christianity and Christian heresies, Manicheism, and doubtless Zoroastrianism (for Arabia was then largely subject to Persia), were all in turn attacked and defended. Mohammad was a man of highly nervous temperament—ardent, imaginative; possessed of a nature at once reflective and emotional. Always pensive, by the age of forty he became abstracted and melancholy. His reason almost gave way; more than once he attempted suicide. He had been a devout heathen, but had honestly abjured his idols; and he began vehemently to denounce them, and to assert the unity and supremacy of Allah. His townsmen loaded him with insult, or treated him with silent contempt. This was more than he could bear. Reason now did probably give way.

Still he felt impelled to preach, at first scarcely claiming to be a prophet. Four years brought forty converts—all of them, except his own family, slaves, or the poorest of the populace. He spent thirteen years at Mecca, and then fled to Medina. The character of his message now greatly changed. Mohammadans speak of the ‘two faces of the Kurān.’ The chapters issued at Mecca are mild and conciliatory; those issued at Medina are fiercely denunciatory.

For the next ten years Mohammad comes forward as a warrior. His cry is now, ‘Fight in defence of the faith.’ Into these ten years

*His career.*

were crowded twenty military expeditions; or, including smaller actions, forty-eight. His band of freebooters swelled into an army which no power in Arabia could resist. He sent ambassadors to announce his prophetic office to the King of Persia, the Viceroy of Egypt, the King of Abyssinia, and the Emperor of Constantinople. He planned a great onset on the last potentate; but when halfway to Damascus the force was found insufficient, and returned to Arabia.

Mohammad died soon after. The Arab tribes broke loose from their enforced allegiance; only three cities remained faithful. But the wisdom of Abu-bakr and the valour of Khalid, 'the Sword of God,' won over or subdued tribe after tribe. Abu-bakr had the sagacity to avail himself of the only means by which their submission could be made permanent. He held up before the restless warriors the prospect of immeasurable spoil. The world was all before them, to subdue for God and the Prophet,—or, in other words, for themselves.

Two empires divided Asia between them as far east as the Indus—those of Constantinople and Persia. Persia had sunk into anarchy; in the space of four years six sovereigns had fallen, and the actual ruler was a boy of sixteen. The Emperor Heraclius had destroyed the Persian power and greatly weakened his own. Moreover, religious strife raged bitterly among the Christians.

All things favoured the impetuous Arabs, as, like high-mettled coursers, they champed the bit, fretting to be let loose. The word was given. Immediately one army was on its way to Zoroastrian Persia, and another to Christian Syria. Both countries were overrun. The vast treasures of the 'king of kings' formed a prize the splendour of which overwhelmed the sons of the desert with amazement; and in the other case the conquest of Jerusalem—a holy city to Moslem as well as Christian—was a still higher recompense. It sent a chill to the heart of Christendom, and raised the spirit of the Moslem to fever heat. Egypt was next subdued; Tripoli and North Africa were reduced in half a century; the commencement of the seventh century saw the Moslem master of the greater part of Spain. Constantinople was twice attacked, but was saved by its massive fortifications and the newly invented Greek fire. It was exactly a hundred years after the 'flight' of Mohammad when the huge wave that till then rolled on remorseless and unchecked had reached its farthest limit. On the banks of the Loire, near the city of Tours, after a fierce struggle of seven days, the Saracen hosts were almost annihilated by the army of Charles Martel (the Hammer), the grandfather of Charlemagne.

Rush of Arab warriors.

There has been thrown around the Khalifate and the Saracenic kingdoms generally—for the vast structure soon broke into fragments—an

The Khalifate.

atmosphere of romance;<sup>1</sup> but when we regard the sober facts of history we see that there was one century of fiery valour and brilliant victory, a second of stagnation and precarious dominion, and a third of rapid and irretrievable decay.

In their progress eastward the Arabs trampled down Buddhism as rank idolatry. To 'people of the Book,' *i.e.* Jews and Christians, they were less severe; but the 'Ordinance of Omar,' as it was called, imposed the most cruel and degrading conditions on all that were not Mohammadans. It is wonderful that Christianity was not crushed to death in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, as it was along the southern border of the Mediterranean.

The Moslem arms pressed eastward as well as westward. By the year 44 (A.D. 666) they had seized Cabul; ten years later, Bokhara; and a little later still, Samarcand.

The Osmanli  
Turks.

The Sultan of Constantinople now claims to be the Khalif or 'successor' of Mohammad. When the various tribes of Turks emerged from the steppes of high Asia, and, as a rule, adopted Islam as their faith, it seemed as if the second deluge was to be more devastating than the first. The power of the Osmanli Turks reaches far down in history, and has all along been blighting. 'Where the Turk's steed

<sup>1</sup> For example, by Tennyson. He speaks of

'The golden prime

Of good Harun al Rashid.'

Harun's 'goodness' was of a very dubious kind.

plants his hoof, there no grass can grow.' It is little more than four centuries since they took Constantinople; little more than two since they were thundering at the gates of Vienna. Since then, however, their power has steadily declined, till now it exists only by sufferance. The cry of the oppressed, especially of the poor Armenians, has been rising up to Heaven against it.

Some writers tell us that we must not ascribe to their religion the horrible doings of the Turkish Government; these, they say, are due to the innate ferocity of the Turk. There may be a small measure of truth in this; and it may so far explain the dreadful career of such a man as Timur (Tamerlane). But the Turks have now had Mohammadan teaching for many centuries. We seem, then, shut up to the alternative—either the Turks are diabolically bad, or Islam is miserably weak, and powerless to soften savage natures.<sup>1</sup>

Islam poisons society at its fountain-head by ruining the family. Divorce, on the part of the man, takes place at pleasure. Thus Hosain, the grandson of Mohammad, though he never had more than the sanctioned

Islam  
destroys the  
family.

<sup>1</sup> We observe that a change took place in the views of that interesting explorer, Joseph Thomson. At first he spoke approvingly of Mohammadan missions; but when he had visited Morocco he awoke to the fact that, when Islam has settled down upon a nation, it destroys all nobler qualities. Morocco, he declared, is at once the most religious nation in the world and the most immoral.

Slavery is  
sanctioned.

Pilgrimage.

allowance of four wives at once, had yet seventy in the course of his life. Concubines can be taken *ad libitum*. Slavery is sanctioned: the Moslem may have as many slaves, male or female, 'as his right hand can possess;' and these slaves are in every way at their master's mercy: the man has no right to his life, nor the woman to her honour. Then the pilgrimage to Mecca, which every Mohammadan ought to perform at least once, has come to be an overwhelming evil. As the facilities of travel increase the number of pilgrims increases, until it has risen to between three and four hundred thousand, and will soon be half a million annually.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the utter childishness of the observances—'stoning the devil,' and all the rest—the pilgrimage is a gigantic evil, involving fearful suffering and death, and generating disease. It is already a terror to Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Can we venture to conjecture to any extent the future of Islam—the time it seems likely to endure? It becomes us to speak very cautiously.

Islam  
wasting  
away in  
Europe

In Europe it is gradually wasting away. It was said by Lamartine, fully more than sixty years ago, that Turkey was perishing for want of Turks. Throughout the whole Turkish empire the Christian races increase in numbers and intelligence, while the Turks remain as they were or decline in both these respects. We stood many years ago on the hill overlooking Smyrna

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Mai, 1895.



while an American missionary pointed out one street after another which, in his time, had belonged to Mohammadans, but had fallen into Christian hands. Throughout all Asia Minor and in parts of Asia whole villages now Mohammadan are said to look wistfully back to former days when they professed Christianity, and were persecuted into renouncing it. But they must remain nominally Mohammadan while the Turkish incubus shall last. Islam is, or has been (for in Turkey there are ominous signs of change), tolerant of missions so long as their efforts are confined to Christians, but bitterly intolerant of preaching to Mohammadans; so that conversion is hardly possible in Turkey, Arabia, Persia, and a great part of Africa. Egypt stands out nobly distinguished in this respect. So, of course, does India. Some cases of baptism have occurred in Persia which seem to have passed unnoticed; but the risk is terrible. The strange system called Babism, though persecuted, seems gaining ground in Persia. It is a common belief, but an erroneous one, that missionary labour produces little or no effect on Mohammadans. Our conviction is that, in proportion to the efforts put forth, the results have not been less satisfactory among Mohammadans than among the upper and middle classes of Hindus. Even in Mohammadan lands Medical Missions ought to be prosecuted.

The region in which Islam seems especially to feel the pressure of Christianity is the south-

Islam losing ground especially in "Netherlands India."

eastern part of Asia, in the islands of Java, Sumatra, Celebes, &c.

We have all been in the habit of saying that Christianity is advancing in India at a considerably more rapid rate than either Hinduism or Islam. This is true when we take India as a whole; but in particular districts it is not so. In a small tract of country on the west coast of Southern India, which is generally called British Malabar—as distinguished from the Hindu states of Cochin and Travancore—Islam advances more than Christianity; and this seems owing to the proselytising zeal of a fiercely fanatical sect, the Moplahs (Mapillas). Of late years Islam has also revived and extended in Eastern Bengal among the agricultural classes.

Gaining in  
parts of  
India.

There has been for a great many years past in India a remarkable movement among Indian Mohammadans, which we may connect with Sir Sayad Ahmad and the College he has established. We may, we trust without offence, call the supporters of this movement Mohammadan Rationalists. They explain away the offensive portions of the Kuran, or hold them to have been temporary enactments. Theirs is a laxly liberal theology, which has a tendency to resolve itself into simple theism. The Nizam of Haidarabad, the greatest Mohammadan prince in India, has given the College his liberal support. It seems probable that this school of thought will extend, and that a reformed Islam, with its headquarters in India, may become a powerful factor in the

Rationalism  
among  
Indian  
Moham-  
madans.

religious history of the world. It is not the first time that Rationalism has arisen among the followers of Mohammad. Under the Khalifate there was a great struggle between the orthodox and a philosophical sect called Mutazala. The distinguished Al Māmun and his two successors held and patronised opinions much opposed to Kuranic orthodoxy. The third successor persecuted them. The traditionalists prevailed, and the Rationalists disappeared by the tenth century. In Turkey or Persia this 'new Islam' would speedily be crushed to death. We have much sympathy with these reformers; but we deny their right to call themselves Mohammadans. Mohammad would have spurned them as unbelievers. They try to reconcile the Arabian civilisation of the seventh century with the European civilisation of the nineteenth. This is like seeking to unite iron and clay. The two things may be forced into contact, but they will neither commingle nor cohere.

The  
Mutazala.

Mohammadanism has penetrated into China. The number of its professors there has been variously estimated at from twenty to thirty millions. These Chinese Mohammadans are restless and discontented. They have repeatedly endeavoured to achieve independence, particularly (in our time) in Yunnan and Kashgar (Chinese Turkestan). These revolts were suppressed by the Chinese with characteristic barbarity.

Islam in  
China.

We have already referred to Egypt as

Missionary  
College in  
Cairo.

exercising toleration. But Egypt contributes to the spread of Islam. In the college Al-Aksar, in Cairo, there are generally from ten to twelve thousand pupils, gathered from all parts of the Mohammadan world to study law, history, and theology. Many Moslem missionaries of a sort proceed from this centre. Mohammadanism has spread over a large part of North Africa, and is still spreading. It now reaches to perhaps within four degrees of the equator.<sup>1</sup> It has extended chiefly, though not solely, through war and conquest,—this among the negro races, at all events. Moslem missionaries have certainly had some influence, yet conflicting views are held in regard to this. Livingstone declared that he had seen no missionary zeal among Mohammadans in Africa, though Mohammadan slave-drivers were sadly numerous. The slaves are circumcised, but neither instructed nor released from slavery. The Arabs speak of the negroes as *gumu*, or callous. So says the great missionary. The Moslem missionaries deal largely in charms and amulets, and frequently are traders rather than preachers. We must remember that there is no version of the Kuran in any African tongue; and, indeed, the Kuran, ceasing to be in Arabic, would cease to be sacred.

Treatment of  
Armenians.

We will not speak—we cannot trust ourselves

<sup>1</sup> So Joseph Thomson says; Dr. Birkbeck Hill, who edited Gordon's journal written in Central Africa, affirms that it reaches only to the tenth degree of north latitude.

to speak—of the treatment of the Armenians by the Turks. In all the blood-stained pages of history is there anything more atrocious? Nor can we speak of the horrors of the slave trade. ‘I am heartsore,’ said Livingstone, ‘and sick of human blood.’ ‘Slaving scenes come back unbidden, and make me start up at night horrified by their vividness.’ ‘Many slaves die broken-hearted.’ And these Satanic outrages, these slave-hunts, are conducted by Moham-madan Arabs, who fiercely contend that they have the sanction of their sacred book for all the atrocities they commit.

### CONCLUSION.

This is not a missionary report, nor a Conclusion. missionary address; yet it should have a direct bearing on missionary action.

Why should we engage in Missions, heart and soul? Christ commands it. That one reason ought to suffice. He has died for all the world, and wills the good news to go to every creature.

But, alas! the Church is only beginning to awake. What can fully rouse her?

One reason of her apathy is her failure to realise the condition of the heathen. She does not really know it. Nor does she really know how powerfully Missions are telling on the Heathen religions. Information is obtainable ;

Need of  
information  
to stimulate  
zeal.

but it is scattered through a multitude of books and pamphlets. It seems, therefore, desirable to gather the leading facts into a small compass.

An attempt has been made to do so in this Tract, and to do it with no over-statement or rhetorical exaggeration. Even in these few pages enough, we trust, has been said to prove that, if we are true Christians—yes, if we are true men and true women—we must hasten to the rescue of the Christless nations.



# THE TRINITY

IN

# SACRED HISTORY.

BY THE  
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DORNER’S ‘HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST,’ ETC.



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:  
56 PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.



## Argument.

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THE design of the following pages is to gather up and classify utterances and acts recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which throw light on the inner constitution of the Godhead; or which, in other words, point in the direction of the Trinity. The Scriptures are for this purpose treated as the literary outcome of a national life, in the moulding of which God took an extraordinary part; and in the course of which, therefore, He naturally and necessarily, 'by divers portions and in divers manners,' unveiled *Himself*, not only His mind and will, but also Himself, His essential nature.

As the divine action, however, had redemption from sin for its purpose, and as revelation was but one of the means employed to that end, and did not include the unveiling of mysteries for the simple enrichment of knowledge, still less the gratification of curiosity, any insight given into the constitution of God must clearly be incidental. This is true even of the light that radiates from the person, works, words, and life of the Incarnate 'Word, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God;' though so rich, varied, and full is it in His case that John might well and truly say, 'We beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father;' and 'No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father—He hath declared Him.'

The evidence for the Trinity is grouped in two divisions, the first of which comprises the hints contained in the Old Testament, which, as the point of view above described would lead one to expect, are scattered and dim; the second, the words and works, the claims and conduct of Christ set forth in the Gospels, so far as they affect His own relation to the Father; and the person and functions of the Holy Spirit.

Save in a very few cases I have contented myself with simply adducing passages. To have attempted more would have meant writing a volume instead of a tract. Besides that, the evidence as thus presented gains rather than loses force.

Within the limits assigned to the discussion it was impossible even to quote and classify, much more to discuss, the references to the subject scattered through the remaining New Testament books; but a few concluding paragraphs are devoted to a brief consideration of one or two peculiarities of the Apostolic testimony which are a source of perplexity to believers, and are made use of by doubters to justify their doubts.

# THE TRINITY IN SACRED HISTORY.

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**B**y Sacred History is meant primarily the history of which the Bible is the inspired literary record, reflex, expression, monument. This historical life is treated as sacred because the characteristics which mark it off from every other known national life were due to the special co-operation of God with the people that lived it; in other words, because the life of the Israelites as a nation was from the beginning under the special guidance, control, and discipline of God. Their life having been as it were divinely moulded to a degree and in a sense which cannot be affirmed of any other national life that has ever been lived, the literature which under divine control, guidance, and inspiration grew out of it, is in a special, yea, exclusive sense a Sacred literature; or, using the word in the broadest sense, their history is Sacred History.

Meaning of  
Sacred  
History.

The Bible  
inspired  
literature.

The *immediate* purpose of the special action of God in and for Israel was to establish normal

Purpose of  
God's spe-  
cial action  
in and for  
Israel.

personal relations, first between Himself and the Israelites, and then, through them as His agents, between Himself and the rest of the human race ; the *ultimate* purpose was the deliverance of men from sin and evil ; otherwise and positively expressed, the establishment of the kingdom of God. The attainment of the remoter goal depended on the accomplishment of the primary object.

The divine  
method  
specially  
national.

The divine method with Israel was in the fullest sense historical, *i. e.* God co-operated in special ways in the life of the Israelites, both as individuals and as a people. He co-operated with individuals, however, not so much in their individual capacity, as in their capacity as members of a people. In a word, so far as the divine dealings went, the social or national predominated over the individual element.

How God  
dealt with  
Israel.

In pursuance of this method God called out elect men ; sent messages, commands, and prohibitions to and by them ; sanctioned or gave laws, institutions, customs, rites, ceremonies ; bestowed blessings and gifts ; deprived of privileges ; inflicted punishments ; wrought deliverances, and sometimes left the people to themselves ; vouchsafed theophanies, inspiration, and instruction ; and gave light, consolation, and strength to all those who feared His name and put their trust in Him. At the same time it

must be borne in mind that the divine relations to Israel were from beginning to end regulated by the law summarily and concretely formulated by Azariah the prophet, the son of Oded: '*The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you*' (2 Chron. xv. 2).

The law of the divine relations to Israel.

If what has been advanced is true, then obviously God will have become known to the Israelites almost exclusively in His relations to *men* as moral governor and redeemer; and in His relations to the *natural world* so far as it and men are bound up with each other. Any insight gained into the constitution of the God-head, as God is in Himself, must have been incidental, and have varied according to the mental and moral characteristics of the seer. Such glimpses could not but have been vague, fragmentary, and of altogether uncertain significance to those who gained them; and clearly intelligible, so far as they were intelligible at all, only in the light of the later and more complete interventions.

Nature of the glimpses given into the constitution of God.

But if God Himself did thus enter into direct relations to men; if men were permitted to hold intercourse with Him; if accordingly He became known to them; if, further, the divine constitution be triune; and if each of the three Persons

Impression  
of the  
Trinity left  
in Israel's  
History.

God a *maker*  
of Israel.

Limits of  
the Sacred  
History.

of the Godhead has taken a specific part in the great work of redemption, it is not unnatural to expect that traces of an impression of the Trinity should be left in the history of the Israelites, even as in the history of all nations traces may be discovered of the great men who have helped to mould and make them—traces, that is, of what *they themselves were*, of their personal characteristics, of their mental constitution, as well as of what they actually did or aimed to do. If the human ‘makers’ of nations are revealed through their activity and work, why should the Divine ‘Maker’ of Israel—*maker*, be it remembered, not in an absolute sense exclusive of human freedom, but in a relative sense—not also be revealed by His activity and His work?

The sacred history, within the limits of which, along the lines just indicated, we shall seek for evidences of the triune constitution of God, extends from Abraham, about 2000 B.C., to the last production of the last of the apostles of Christ, and may be divided into three great sections, extending, the *first* from Abraham to the Annunciation; the *second* from the Annunciation of Christ to His Ascension; the *third* from the Ascension of Christ to the latest of the New Testament writings.

The most important—immeasurably the most

important—of these sections is that which began with the conception of Christ and closed with His ascension. Whilst the second may be compared to the nightly heavens when moon and planets shine in their clearest radiance, the first resembles the same heavens when naught is to be seen but here and there a pale speck of light, which almost fades away whilst it is being contemplated. And just as the stars seem to grow dim when the moon is at full, so do the hints scattered through even the third period, and much more during the first, apparently lose their significance as we study the plain facts and teachings of the second period. The present pages will deal only with the first and second of the periods just mentioned.

Earlier and later traces compared.

## I. THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE SACRED HISTORY.

Four things cannot but strike an inquirer, lying as they do on the very surface of the Old Testament. In the *first* place, several words or expressions are used to denote God, two of which, namely, Elohim and Jehovah, decidedly predominate: further, one of these terms, viz. Elohim, has a plural form, and is used both in a polytheistic and a monotheistic sense; never, however, in the former sense of the God of Israel; whilst the other, Jehovah, which is singular both

Four striking facts.

in form and meaning, occurs along with Elohim as well as independently. In the *second* place, certain distinct personal forms—Mal'ach, Angel, Face—are associated with Elohim or Jehovah, if not to the point of personal identification, yet certainly to that of representative speech and action. In the *third* place, there is a very decided tendency to the personification of what must primarily be characterised as divine attributes, powers, or modes of working;—for example, 'Wisdom,' 'Word,' and 'Spirit.' And *finally*, attention is arrested by the remarkable, yea, almost mysterious ideal figure designated 'Servant of Jehovah,' 'Messiah,' 'Son of God.'

The names  
of God—  
Elohim,  
Jehovah.

1. Consider first the *names of God*. It is commonly held that *Elohim* denotes God in general, whilst *Jehovah* denotes God in His special relation to the covenant people. This distinction, however, is by no means carefully observed or carried through: for sometimes both are used together; sometimes the one or the other is used by itself, and it does not seem possible in all cases to assign an adequate reason for the usage. For example, in Ezekiel, Elohim occurs alone (see xxxvii. 23, 27); Jehovah alone (see xxxvi. 11, 16; xxxvii. 4, 6, 15); and Jehovah Elohim occur together frequently in these same chapters, though also elsewhere.

But what is strange is that the Israelites,



alongside of their own special name Jehovah, even at a date when there can be no doubt about its signifying God in the monotheistic sense, should have still continued to employ the plural term Elohim. This would be all the more surprising if, as some maintain, it were simply a relic of their polytheistic days.

Employ-  
ment of  
plural  
Elohim  
remarkable.

May the circumstance not be due to the feeling which dimly possessed them, that notwithstanding the unity recognised, not only in the adoption and retention of the singular name Jehovah alongside of Elohim, but also by the use of singular pronouns, adjectives, and verbs with the plural Elohim, God was plural in some sense or way which they were as far from understanding as they were from being able to formulate? Is it not even possible that the plural designation *originated* in a dim vision of this plural constitution of the *one* God, though it afterwards became one of the occasions or supports of polytheism; and that, in order to correct or prevent this later misuse, God revealed Himself to the Israelites by the name Jehovah?<sup>1</sup>

Possible ex-  
planation of  
the fact.

<sup>1</sup> In the Tell-el-Amarna letters, we are told in an article in the American *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July, 1897, by Professor J. M. P. Metcalf, 'the prevailing address to Pharaoh is "To my lord, my god, my sun." This deification of Pharaoh was in entire accord with Egyptian usage. They even went a step further and said, "My lord, my *gods*, my sun." This reminds us immediately of the Old Testament usage of Elohim

One would have expected that a word which, to say the least, might prove a temptation to the recognition of strange gods would have been rejected, especially when there was a designation which was believed to have been prescribed by God Himself, and against which the same objection could not be urged.

The Theophanies in the Old Testament.

2. The *appearances of God* recorded in the early books of the Old Testament left the impression that in some way or other Elohim or Jehovah had what one might perhaps venture to term an angelic 'double.' This 'other' bears in Hebrew the name Mal'ach, and has for its equivalent 'Angel of Elohim,' or 'Angel of Jehovah.' The former of these descriptions occurs some six times; the latter, no fewer than fifty times.

Apparent positions of the Mal'ach or Angel.

Sometimes this Mal'ach appears to be a distinct or independent created intelligence, employed as a divine messenger or representative; as, for example, in Judg. xiii. 6, 8, 9, 'angel of Elohim;' and in Judg. vi. 22; xiii. 3, 15-21, 'angel of Jehovah.' At other times it seems

for God, and I take it to be a strong confirmation of that interpretation which makes it a plural of majesty.' This seems likely, and agrees with recent conclusions; but the question still of course arises, Why should a plural form be employed to express majesty in the case of God, who was regarded as a contrast to, rather than as the unification of, gods—particularly of false gods?

to be a sort of personal organ through which Elohim speaks (Gen. xvi. 13; xxxi. 11-13; Exod. xiv. 19-24); or Jehovah (Gen. xvi. 7-13; xxii. 1-18; xxxii. 24-30; xlviii. 15, 16). In still other cases, however, the Mal'ach is, in one and the same connection, both distinguished from and identified with Jehovah; as, for example, in the remarkable account of the destruction of Sodom. The two angels who came to Sodom (Gen. xix. 1) say to Lot, 'We will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before Jehovah; and Jehovah hath sent us to destroy it. Up, get you out of this place; for Jehovah will destroy the city' (Gen. xix. 13, 14). 'Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven' (xix. 24). Whilst in ver. 29 of the same chapter the same event is ascribed to Elohim.

The Angels  
at Sodom.

Various explanations have been given of the phenomena just adduced, many of which more or less betray the influence of theories that implicitly or explicitly exclude special divine interventions in the life of Israel; but any one who acknowledges the reality of such interventions will find it difficult to refrain altogether from agreement with most Christian theologians in attaching to them at least some measure of significance, relatively to the Trinity.

Significant  
as regards  
the Trinity.

Personifica-  
tions of  
attributes  
and  
activities.

3. The *third* class of phenomena embraces what have been designated *personifications* of *modes* of the *divine activity*, or forms of divine energy. The Israelites who witnessed or experienced them seem to have been impelled to speak of them as if they had a kind of independent existence—to objectify them, or to personify them. They are not, it is true, consistent in their practice; but that they evince an inclination thereto, real, though not perhaps conscious, yea, sometimes decided, is undeniable.

Use of the  
'Word of  
Jehovah.'

(1) It is traceable in connection with the expression 'word of God.' Three very characteristic cases occur in the Book of Psalms. In Ps. xxxiii. 6 we read, 'By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth;' which obviously leads on to Gen. i. 3, 6; in Ps. cxlvii. 15, 'He sendeth out His commandment upon earth; His word runneth very swiftly,' *i. e.* to carry out the divine order in the processes of nature; and in Ps. cvii. 20, 'He sendeth His word, and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions.'

Prophets  
dimly felt  
a speaker  
in 'The  
Word.'

Then there is the striking formula—'The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,' employed, for example, by Jeremiah (i. 4, 11; ii. 1), Ezekiel (iii. 16; vi. 1), Hosea (i. 1), Jonah (i. 1), Micah (i. 1), to describe their experience,

as though behind or within the actual message there were dimly discernible a speaker, who, however, was not clearly perceptible enough to receive any name other than that of the objectified message.

(2) Still more distinct is the personification of 'Wisdom' in Prov. viii. 22-31 (cf. iii. 19; i. 7; ix. 10; viii. 1-21; Job xxviii. 20-28, for less bold personifications), where *existence from eternity*—'I was set up from everlasting;' 'When He established the heavens, I was there;' *co-operation with God in creation*—'When He established the heavens, . . . when He marked out the foundations of the earth, I was by Him as a master workman;' *the being the object of the divine delight*—'I was daily His delight;' 'rejoicing before God;' 'rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and delighting in the sons of men,' are all ascribed to Wisdom. As an eminent German theologian has said, wisdom is here personified in so peculiar a manner that we are unable to treat it as a mere attribute. What was the writer's precise thought we may be unable to determine; but that there hovered before his mind a relation of wisdom to God such that it seemed truer to represent it as existing alongside of God, than to treat it simply as an attribute of God, seems unquestionable.<sup>1</sup>

Personifica-  
tion of  
Wisdom.

Goes  
beyond a  
mere divine  
attribute.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Langen, *Das Judenthum in Palästina zur Zeit Christi*,

The least one can say is that a drift in the direction referred to is initiated, or that hints are, so to speak, thrown out which will prepare the way for clearer insight and stronger utterances hereafter.

‘Word,’  
‘Wisdom,’  
and John’s  
‘Logos.’

In point of fact, too, the references, both to ‘Word’ and ‘Wisdom,’ assume a more and more concrete and definite form in the mind of Jewish thinkers as time goes on, till, as we shall eventually see, they reach their culmination in the prologue to the Gospel of John, where the one word ‘Logos’ may be regarded as uniting and expressing the essential meaning of both. In the Apocryphal books, ‘The Wisdom of Solomon,’ ‘Ecclesiasticus,’ and ‘Baruch,’ the words of Proverbs just discussed are expanded and strengthened in a way which, conjoined with the teachings of Philo, may well have prepared the way for John’s doctrine of the Logos; though they neither did nor could fully anticipate it even in form: still less can they be regarded as identical with it in substance.

References  
to the Spirit  
of God.

More remarkable still, and far more diffused through the Old Testament, are the references to the ‘Spirit of God.’ They may be briefly summarised as follows.

The Spirit is frequently mentioned alone,

pp. 248—281; cf. Dorner, *History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, vol. i, 13—47, E. Tr.

occasionally also with the epithet holy or good. For the most part, however, we read 'Spirit of Elohim' or 'Spirit of Jehovah.' In a few passages the Spirit is spoken of in terms which suggest independent activity; the allusions would even bear the interpretation that He was the proper originator of the action ascribed to Him. So, for example, in Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13; xxxiii. 4. In Is. xlvi. 16 the strange words occur, 'Jehovah hath sent me, and His Spirit;' and in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 'The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me; and His word was upon my tongue.' The words are the more striking as the Spirit is represented as doing what God elsewhere does, namely, speaking by a man; at the same time mostly as energy which is 'poured out' (see Joel ii. 28).

Various modes of activity are ascribed to the Spirit, which may be briefly classified as follows:—Activity relating to nature or the natural world, including animals and also man, naturally or corporeally considered; activity relating to the higher nature, powers, and functions of man—intellectual, moral, spiritual; special action affecting in special ways the body, the intellect, artistic skill, the judgment; and in general so heightening the powers as to cause men to see, hear, understand, and give utterance to and perform things which would otherwise

Modes of  
activity  
ascribed to  
the Spirit.



have lain beyond their reach. In some way or other the higher Israelitish minds were led to conceive of that in God which, broadly speaking, is the principle of life in the created world, as the Spirit of Elohim or of Jehovah. Bodily life and strength, human reason with its manifestations in song, in art, in prophetic discourse, in fitness to rule ; especially, however, moral and spiritual purity and righteousness ; were all viewed as the work of the Spirit of God. But whilst their words not unfrequently point in the direction of a distinction in God, and can be used to express it, we are not warranted in assuming that they consciously meant to convey the idea of plurality, least of all personal plurality, in the Godhead.<sup>1</sup>

What the  
writers  
meant.

4. The clearest hints with regard to the element of plurality in the divine constitution are those given in connection with Messiah, ‘the ideal form of the future great Son of David,’ as He has been designated, ‘who in vision is seen, by several prophets, springing forth from the stem of David, after it has been humbled to the dust by the judgments of which Assyria was the divine instrument.’ The Messiah is not merely the deliverer of

The  
Messiah.

<sup>1</sup> There are of course passages like that in Joel ii. 28, previously referred to, in which the Spirit is represented impersonally, as energy which can be poured out or communicated, as physical energy is communicated to the human body.

the external theocracy, but the divine agent in the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.<sup>1</sup>

(1) Not only are *qualities* or attributes and circumstances ascribed to Him, which strictly speaking belong alone to God; but what is more remarkable still, relations, functions, activities, and works are assigned to Him which elsewhere are assigned to Jehovah or God.

Divine attributes and functions ascribed to Him.

Examples of the former are found in at least two well-known and often discussed passages, viz.—‘Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever’ (Is. ix. 6, 7); and Mic. v. 2, ‘But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall One come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.’

Examples of the ascription of divine attributes.

Elsewhere the work of redemption, the establishment of the kingdom of God, is ascribed

<sup>1</sup> Schlottmann, *Biblische Theologie*, § 79.

now to Jehovah, then to Messiah in distinction from Jehovah.

Redemption  
ascribed to  
Jehovah.

Of the first class of passages the following are a few examples out of the many that might be adduced.

(2) The *work* to be accomplished is ascribed either to God (Elohim), or the Lord (Jehovah), or to the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim).

So, for example: 'In that day shall the branch of Jehovah be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. . . . When Jehovah shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment. . . . Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night' (Is. iv. 2, 4, 5); 'Behold, your God (Elohim) will come with vengeance; . . . He will come and save you. . . . And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads' (Is. xxxv. 4, 10); 'Behold, the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) will come as a mighty one, and His arm shall rule for Him' (Is. xl. 10); 'Thus saith the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim), Behold, I myself, even I, will search for My sheep, and will seek them out; . . . and I will deliver them out of all places whither

Redemption  
ascribed to  
Jehovah  
Elohim.

they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land' (Ezek. xxxiv. 11—13); 'Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah. . . . And I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord (Jehovah) of hosts hath sent me unto thee' (Zech. ii. 10, 11).<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere it is ascribed to a human being, who is sometimes defined as a descendant of David, sometimes not.

So, for example, the well-known words of Isaiah describing the shoot out of the stock of Jesse, who is to bring about a state when 'they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord (Jehovah), as the waters cover the sea' (Is. xi. 1—9); or where Jeremiah speaks of the 'righteous Branch' raised 'unto David,' who 'shall reign as king, and deal wisely and execute judgment and justice in the land' (xxiii. 5; cf. xxxiii. 15);<sup>2</sup> or where Jehovah Elohim says through Ezekiel, 'I the Lord (Jehovah) will be their God (Elohim), and My servant David prince among them' (xxxiv. 24); or when Jeremiah

Redemption  
ascribed to  
a descendant  
of  
David.

Compare further Ps. xvi. 10; xcviii. 9; Is. x. 23; xix. 22; xlv. 21; lii. 12; lx. 2; Ezek. xliii. 2, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12.

says, ' Their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them ' (ch. xxx. 21).

The  
Messiah not  
conceived  
to be God  
man.

There is not adequate reason for maintaining that even the greatest of Israel's prophets conceived of the Jehovah or Jehovah Elohim who was to deliver Israel and establish the ideal kingdom which was the *raison d'être* and goal of Israel's peculiar history, as other than the one true and living God; or of the Messiah as God incarnate, as God man; and yet it seems no less clear that they took two things for granted: on the one hand, that Jehovah Himself must undertake for His people; whilst, on the other hand, in some way or other the mission devolved on a branch of the stem of Jesse, an elect servant of the house of David. The conjunction is the more remarkable because, if a Jewish thinker had endeavoured to think it out from the point of view from which he contemplated Jehovah, he must have pronounced it one of incompatibles. To them the event expressed in John's words, *Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*, i.e. the incarnation, must have seemed an impossibility. Yet from our present point of view it is plainly the *synthesis towards which pointed* words like those of which examples have been adduced.

Jehovah the  
Redeemer;  
yet also an  
elect mem-  
ber of the  
house of  
David.

Point  
towards the  
Incarna-  
tion.

In a dim twilight haze one and another of the minds which had closest intercourse with

God and deepest insight into the divine workings caught glimpses of the two characteristics of Him through whom the world's and Israel's golden age was to be inaugurated and realised ; but they attempted no synthesis—perhaps they felt no need of one.

It almost seems, in fact, as I may here remark in anticipation, that even after the synthesis had become a fact, very few of those who came face to face with it realised that it was a synthesis ; though they emphasise each constituent in turn with a force and consistency that far transcend what we find in the language of the great men who preceded the Redeemer's advent.

## II. THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE SACRED HISTORY.

The question now to be considered is, How far the Trinity unveils itself in connection with Christ. What evidence for the Triune constitution of God is furnished through and by Christ—furnished, namely, by the manner of His entrance into the world, by His person, His behaviour, and His life ?

How far the Trinity is unveiled by Christ.

So far as we can judge from the reminiscences of Him left us by His disciples, Christ gave very little if any formal instruction regarding His own Person or Nature, whether in its relation to

The nature  
of Christ's  
references  
to Himself.

men or God. His references can scarcely ever be characterised as other than incidental; and even then they are rather ethical, or if I may so say ethico-ontological, than properly metaphysical. At the same time, if He were what the Christian Church has believed, it was only natural that the glimpses of the constitution of the Godhead which He and His life afforded must have been so much clearer and fuller than any previously vouchsafed to men, that we cannot wonder at His being spoken of as having come to manifest and reveal God.

1. *The Trinity in the Birth of Jesus Christ.*—

Matthew's  
account of  
the birth of  
Jesus.

According to *Matthew*, 'the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise.' Mary His mother was found with child of the Holy Ghost, and the Son whom she brought forth was described by the Angel of the Lord, or Jehovah, as Emmanuel, namely, God with us, who was to be called Jesus, because He should save His people from their sins.

Luke's  
account of  
the birth of  
Jesus.

According to *Luke*, an angel named Gabriel announced to Mary His mother that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her; that the holy thing born of her should be called the Son of the Highest, the Son of God; and that the Lord God, viz. Jehovah Elohim, would give unto Him the throne of His father David, that He should



reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and that of His kingdom there should be no end. An angel further brought the tidings to the shepherds of the birth of 'a Saviour, Christ the Lord.'

According to *John*, Jesus Christ was the 'Logos,' or Word and Reason, made flesh; and this 'Logos' was in the beginning; was in the beginning with God; was God; all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

John's  
reference  
to the In-  
carnation.

We find, therefore, that Matthew and Luke speak of the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim), or the Lord (Jehovah); of the Holy Ghost, who is the Power of the Highest; and of a Being who is the Son of the Highest, the Son of God, Emmanuel with us. John supplements the statements of Matthew and Luke, and leads us an important step further by identifying the 'Son of God,' 'the Son of the Highest,' with the Logos of God, which was God.

Matthew,  
Luke, and  
John sup-  
plement  
each other.

Matthew, by calling the Son of Mary 'Emmanuel;' and Luke, by announcing that He should occupy the throne of His father David, link on to one class of Old Testament hints; John, by the use of the term 'Logos,' links on to another class; whilst the first two recall and emphasise the strongest Old Testament references to the Spirit of God.

Unless the reports of the Evangelists are

untrustworthy, or are to be explained away as Orientalisms, there can be little doubt that three divine persons co-operated in the genesis of Jesus of Nazareth, called the Christ, the Son of God.

The Trinity  
in the  
career of  
Christ.

## 2. *The Trinity in the Career of Jesus Christ.*—

(1) God manifests Himself as God or Father to and through Jesus Christ.

Direct self-  
manifesta-  
tion of God  
as Father.

(i) He does so directly in the following cases :  
—So at the baptism of Christ, ‘a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ (Matt. iii. 17 ; cf. Mark i. 11 ; and Luke iii. 22). Again, according to Matt. xvii. 5, on the mount of transfiguration a voice says out of the cloud, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased : hear ye Him.’ Still further, according to John xii. 27, Christ said, ‘Now is my soul troubled ; and what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour : but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.’

There is a  
divine  
Father and  
a divine  
Son.

Accepting these as facts, they clearly warrant the assumption that there is a divine Father, and no less a divine Son. At present we are concerned with the former. Here is one who speaks as a Father, though He does not designate Himself such ; one, too, whom the whole

tenor of the gospel narratives compels us to regard as divine, as God.

(ii) He is indirectly thus revealed in numerous cases. Christ often refers to His Father, meaning God. The most striking of these cases occur in the prayers of Christ. For example, 'Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me; and I knew that Thou hearest Me always' (John xi. 41). 'Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee' (xvii. 1; see v. 5). 'Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me' (xvii. 11). 'Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt' (Mark xiv. 36; see Matt. xxvi. 39, 42; Luke xxii. 42).

Indirect  
manifestation of God  
as Father.

If these and other references made by Christ to His Father bear the meaning which the words naturally suggest, and if Christ used the words of soberness and truth, they clearly involve the existence of a divine Fatherhood no less than the existence of a Son, who is Son of God—who is such in a special sense; in other words, they involve two divine Persons, who, though two, as being divine must in some way or other be united in the one God.

(2) Jesus Christ acts and speaks in a manner which would be incomprehensible if He were not divine.

Christ's  
mode of  
action and  
speech  
involves  
divinity.

(i) Consider first the way in which He wields the forces of the natural system to which He belonged.

Inorganic  
forces obey  
Him.

(a) *Inorganic forces* obeyed His behest. When 'He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea,' 'even the winds and the sea obeyed Him, and there was a great calm' (Matt. viii. 26, 27; Mark iv. 39; Luke viii. 24). So, too, when He walked on the sea (Matt. xiv. 25; Mark vi. 48; John vi. 19). Though it is inaccurate to speak of His violating or suspending the law of gravitation in the latter case, He certainly did show Himself possessed of power to resist the attraction of the earth, which would otherwise have dragged Him down into the water. Still more manifest was His mastery of the same force when He enabled Peter to walk the stormy wave like Himself. Not many of Christ's miracles are more wonderful than this, or bear clearer testimony to His being the Ruler of nature and man.

He controls  
organic  
processes.

(b) Note next His control over the processes of the *organic* sphere—that, too, in both its departments, the *vegetable* and the *animal*.

Think how at the marriage of Cana water was turned into wine (John ii. 1–11); how the seven or five loaves and the few or two small fishes were multiplied (Matt. xiv. 13–21; xv. 32–39; Mark vi. 30–44; viii. 1–9); how the fig tree suddenly

withered (Matt. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 13); how, again, the fish gathered together to fill the nets cast out by His disciples (John xxi. 6; Luke v. 4-6); how defects of sight and hearing, paralysis, leprosy, and other diseases were healed; how the lame were enabled to walk; and, above all, how the dead were raised to life,—all at His command. Otherwise described, at His simple volition chemical elements flow together of the proper kind and in due proportion, and constitute themselves into wine or bread or fish, without passing through the long and subtle processes which characterise natural growth and human manufacture. In the tree He caused the elements that constitute root and wood, and bark and foliage, to assume the disordered relations which involve decay and death. He rectifies the disordered relations between the various parts of the human organism, or between the human organism and its environment, which constitute what we call disease; and restores health, strength, and normal functions without the intervention of medicine, diet, imagination, or time—sometimes in the absence of either faith or expectation of any kind. The fish mysteriously assemble at His silent behest. Yea, even the final dissolution of the human organism, which we call death, was arrested or reversed by Him at His pleasure,

Healing of  
disease and  
restoration  
of health.

and the body redintegrated to life and activity.

Must He not  
be the  
Jehovah of  
the Old  
Testament ?

Must not this be He of whom John said, ' All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made ' ? (i. 3). Must He not be the Jehovah of whom the writer of the 147th Psalm exclaims, ' Great is our Lord, and of great power ; His understanding is infinite ' ? for assuredly it was not mere power that Christ displayed—though that was wonderful enough, but power instinct with, guided by intelligence, by wisdom such as we admire in nature, and such as in all ages has been a ladder up which souls climbed to God. In discussing these miracles we are apt to overlook the knowledge of the proportions and arrangements and structure of the organisms which was displayed by Christ, when at His word they were restored to health, strength, and beauty.

Even as  
mere know-  
ledge  
amazing.

It has sometimes been objected that what these miracles prove, even if their reality be granted, is rather knowledge than power :—suppose that to be so, how amazing the knowledge !—a knowledge not merely of the natural processes to be initiated, how to initiate them, and what forces to employ ; but knowledge to superintend the processes, *i. e.* to take the place in those processes which is commonly assigned to natural law.

(ii) Consider next the *knowledge and control of denizens of the invisible world* which are termed *daimonia* (daemons, not devils), and the authority He exercises over them.

In eight instances Christ recognised them as the cause of certain morbid phenomena in men; commanded them to depart, and thus restored the afflicted ones to health. One was that of a dumb man (Matt. ix. 32; Luke xi. 14); another that of a blind and dumb man (Matt. xii. 22); a third that of a lunatic child (Matt. xvii. 18); a fourth that of a man possessed with an unclean spirit (Mark i. 23); the fifth and sixth those of two men possessed with the *daimonia*, which called themselves legion (Matt. viii. 28-33; Mark v. 2-9; Luke viii. 26-30); the seventh the unclean spirit which possessed the daughter of the Syrophenician woman (Mark vii. 26); the eighth the spirit of infirmity in the woman who was bowed together (Luke xiii. 11, 16).

Christ's  
power over  
daemons.

If the reality of possession by invisible intelligences, called in the time of our Lord *daimonia*, be allowed—and thus far the objections are of such a nature as logically to involve the rejection of Christ Himself—who must He be who thus knows and is known by beings which were an inscrutable mystery and terror to all other men; and, what is more, who controls their coming and going by His mere

What must  
He be who  
thus knows  
and com-  
mands in  
the invisible  
sphere?



word? Here there is none of the apparatus, none of the mystery-mongering, none of the legerdemain or hocus-pocus of the dealer in black arts or the wizard; but a Master, a Lord, who sees and knows the invisible sphere, and needs but to say to its dwellers, Come, and they come; or, Go, and they go. Even more amazing still is the fact that He was able to delegate to His disciples or followers similar authority and power (Matt. x. 8; Mark xvi. 17).

Knowledge and authority in relation to the invisible world of another kind, indeed, but equally foreign to mere humanity, is claimed by Him when He tells His disciples, 'In My Father's house are many abiding places: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also' (John xiv. 2, *et seq.*). What strange language to be employed in soberness! It lacks the tone of mere dreaming or imagination or speculation, however earnestly religious; the words are the words of One who can say as He said in another connection, 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen' (John iii. 11). But we may well ask, how can He speak so confidently of the 'many abiding places' in a 'Father's house'? Who is He that He dare

Christ's  
words about  
His  
Father's  
house.

undertake to 'prepare places' for men in the invisible world after death? and to promise to fetch each to his own place, and to secure that they shall be where He is? Either the words are those of Him who is Lord of life and death, King of the visible and invisible spheres; or they are the words of One in whose madness there was a method which the world surely had never witnessed before.

As akin to the claim just referred to, the promises may be adduced, 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matt. xviii. 20); and 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age' (Matt. xxviii. 20): the first implying the power to be present really, though invisibly, in at all events more than one place at the same time; and the other, the power to be with men regardless no less of time than of space.

The promise to be with His disciples to the end of the world.

Either the words must be emptied of their natural meaning, or else Christ conceives Himself to be capable of at least personal *multipresence*, if not literally of omnipresence. He—the veritable person Christ—would be in the midst of companies of His disciples, or with them, wherever they might be, to the end of time. For a mere man to be present with more than one man or set of men at the same time, even in spirit as we say, is an impossibility, if it signify conscious

*Multi-presence* if not omnipresence.

interest ; what shall we think of Him who can be personally with any number of such men or sets of men, not merely at one or another date, but throughout all time ?

His power  
to lay down  
His life and  
take it  
again.

A further kindred power asserted for Himself by Christ is that referred to in John x. 17, 18 : ‘Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.’ Power to lay down a life which no man taketh ! nay, more, power to resume the life which He Himself lays down ! Extraordinary power, surely ! Not taken by men against His will, yet by wicked hands crucified and slain ! Die and revive—at His own will and pleasure ! Life taken by men, yet voluntarily terminated !

The moral  
authority  
asserted  
over men.

(iii) Consider, thirdly, the *moral authority* which Christ asserts over men, and which is little, if at all, short of absolute.

In what a masterful key is the discourse set, which above all others is now-a-days spoken of as characteristically Christ’s !—‘Ye have heard that it was said ;’ ‘it hath been said ;’ ‘*but I say unto you ;*’ ‘whosoever heareth these sayings of *Mine*, and doeth them ;’ ‘every one that heareth these sayings of *Mine*, and doeth them not’ (Matt. v.—vii.).

What is constantly revealed by tone and manner is distinctly expressed when He says, This distinctly expressed. ‘Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am’ (John xiii. 13); and perhaps even more strongly in the words, ‘I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes’ (Matt. xi. 25). What strange self-exaltation! And yet who so meek and lowly as He?

Think, too, of His procedure in calling men to follow Him. By what right does He impose on the rich young ruler the duty of selling all he had, distributing to the poor, taking up his cross, and following Him? (Matt. xix. 21; Mark x. 21; Luke xviii. 22). By what right does He command James and John to leave their father and their occupation to follow Him? (Matt. iv. 21). By what right does He enjoin on one of His disciples to leave his father, whom he wished first to bury, to be buried by others? (Matt. viii. 21, 22).

Think, again, of the enormous assumption involved in those characteristic utterances, ‘Who-soever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, cannot be My disciple’ (Luke xiv. 33). ‘He that loveth father or mother more than *Me* is not worthy of *Me*; and he that loveth son or daughter *more than Me* is not worthy of *Me*’ Cases of enormous assumption.

(Matt. x. 37). 'If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple' (Luke xiv. 26). 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life *for My sake*, the same shall save it' (Luke ix. 24).

Who can He  
be who thus  
deals with  
human  
relations?

Who is He who thus dares to deal with all human occupations, relations, obligations, as subordinate to work for and obligation and relation to Himself? and to demand the suppression of the most sacred human affections *for His sake*? not, be it remarked, for the sake of truth, for the sake of duty, for the sake of country, but *for His sake*? Surely unheard-of, unparalleled presumption unless He is incarnate divine law!

Then, again, why should men expose themselves to persecution (Matt. v. 11) and to the hatred of their fellow-men for His name's sake? (Mark xiii. 13).

Assumption  
of the right  
to forgive  
sin.

And, last of all, what an assumption of divine authority when in His own name, and expressly in His own right, He forgives sins!—'that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins' (Matt. ix. 6; Mark ii. 10; Luke v. 24),—not merely offences against Himself, but offences either against other men or against God, or against both! Nay, even more, He entrusted His apostles also with authority to do

the same,—‘ Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained ’ (John xx. 23).

The phase of Christ’s conduct which has just been under consideration strikes one all the more when it is remembered that it affects the domain in which man has most right, nay, more, the profoundest obligation to use his own judgment. Of any one, were he even the highest archangel, giving commands and prohibitions that touch the ordinary relations of life, the humblest has a right to ask, By what authority? In whose name? Where is the law? What saith conscience? In the universe there is only One who can claim to do this in His own name,—the Absolutely Good, who is the source of all law, the standard of all truth and right—God.

(iv) Note how Christ represents the *essential well-being* of men, *their relation to God*, *God’s relation to them*, and *their eternal destiny*, as *conditioned by their relation to Himself*.

Men’s  
destiny  
dependent  
on their  
relation to  
Him.

He does this in a great variety of ways and in many connections. Indeed, the four Gospels—the Synoptics no less than that of John—abound with direct and indirect illustrations.

a. Let us begin with that most comprehensive and beautiful of Christ’s invitations, ‘ Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon

How can  
Christ  
make  
burdens  
light and  
give rest?

View taken  
of the  
passage by  
Unitarian  
writers.

you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and my burden is light' (Matt. xi. 28-30). He who claims to be 'meek and lowly in heart'—meek and lowly *men* do not thus emphasise their own meekness and lowliness—exhorts those who toil and are burdened to learn of *Him*, and to take upon themselves *His* yoke! How dare He thus put Himself in the foreground? Who is He that can undertake to give rest to burdened *souls*? that is authorised to make *their* burdens light and yokes easy? to impose *His* yoke? So incredible is it that any mere man in his sober senses should offer himself in this way to his fellow-men, so plainly therefore does the invitation imply divine authority and power, that the most eminent of modern Unitarians argues from this, that *inasmuch as* Jesus was not divine, He could not have spoken the words,—that they must therefore have been put into His mouth by some later admirer. If they stood alone, one might be tempted to regard them as spurious; but as they are quite of one piece with much besides, this is not more needless than inadmissible.

Consider further, the following:—'I am the light of the world' (John viii. 12), He witnessed concerning Himself to Pharisees, to



whom His words were an offence; 'I am the door of the sheep;' 'I am the good shepherd' (John x. 7, 11); 'I am the vine, ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me;' 'Apart from Me ye can do nothing' (John xv. 4, 5); 'He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life.' 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves' (John vi. 53, 54)! Well might many of His disciples go back and walk no more with him (John vi. 66). 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst' (John iv. 14). 'Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you' (John xiv. 27).

Christ the door, shepherd, vine.

Without Him do nothing. Take His flesh and blood.

Well might Christ's hearers say, These are hard sayings; who can hear them? (see John vi. 60).

b. Note further such words as 'He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me,' namely, God (Matt. x. 39, 40). 'If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins' (John viii. 24); 'This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and

Believing in Him condition of life.

I will raise him up at the last day' (John vi. 40); 'I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live' (John xi. 25).

Love of  
Him causes  
us to be  
loved of the  
Father.

Or, again, 'If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and *We* will come unto him, and make Our abode with him' (John xiv. 23). 'I have chosen you, and ordained you, . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in *My name*, He may give it you' (John xv. 16); 'In that day . . . . whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you' (John xvi. 23; cf. xiv. 13, *et. seq.*).

Or, again, 'When He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained' (John xx. 22, 23).

The signifi-  
cance of  
the exercise  
of such  
functions  
and powers.

Who can He be who ascribes to Himself and exercises such functions, privileges, powers? Even approximations to claims of this kind—to which some put forward by certain Churches and ecclesiastics are, of course, not parallel, so far as they do not speak in their own name—are treated as signs of insanity: but there is no insanity here; nay, more, in His presence the thought of extravagance or presumption does not suggest itself. His *words* carry authority

because we feel that *He has* authority, and He has authority because of what He is!

(v) Christ's *personal relation* to the *divine law* of life, both indirect and direct, both in word and act, was such as to suggest either divinity, or a character which one shrinks even from suggesting.

Christ's  
personal  
relation to  
the law.

*a.* No word ever escapes Him, so far as the record goes, that indicates the faintest sense of self-dissatisfaction; and what is more, He boldly throws down the gauntlet to His hostile critics: 'Which of you convinceth Me of sin?' (John viii. 46). Nay, more, in various ways He lays claim to a positive moral excellence which no mere man has ever pretended to possess, and the pretension to which would be taken as a proof of a deplorable lack thereof.

What man could say with Him, 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me' (John xiv. 30); 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work' (John iv. 34); or 'I do nothing of Myself; . . . as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things; . . . I do always those things that please Him' (John viii. 28, 29); or, 'My judgment is just, because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me' (John v. 30); or 'I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do' (John

Utterances  
of Christ  
implying  
moral  
perfection.

xvii. 4); 'For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also [the disciples] might be sanctified through the truth' (John xvii. 19)? Who that was conscious of a minimum of sin, even though, as has been said, He had at the same time realised a maximum of the righteousness possible to men, could have ventured to say regarding Himself, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9); and 'I and My Father are one' (John x. 30)? Whether we take these words in an ethical or metaphysical sense matters little for the purpose in hand. For a man who was morally imperfect to have claimed oneness with God, and the power of setting forth the Father perfectly, would have betrayed either a presumption, heresy, blasphemy, or self-delusion bordering on insanity. Besides, what does human experience teach us in this domain? Is it not that the holier a man becomes, the more nervously does he shrink from self-assertion like that which has just been adduced, the more decidedly does he leave the judgment of himself with God; meanwhile rejoicing, if he rejoice at all, with fear and trembling? Christ shows none of the diffidence, self-distrust, recognition of the possibility of mistake as to His own state and conduct, that the best of men betray. So far, too, as He experiences sorrow or depression, it is due to His sense of the sinfulness and perils of

The holier a mere man becomes the more does he leave himself to the judgment of God.

those with whom He had to do ; no hint, no look, no gesture warrants the supposition that it was intensified, as it is in our own case, by the consciousness of participating therein, and of having therefore in some way contributed to it.

*b. A further feature of Christ's character* is this, that whilst He was stern—terribly stern—in His treatment of the hypocritical, the unjust, the self-righteous, His tenderness and sympathy for the penitent and humble and despairing, however low and degraded they might be, were all-abounding. Remembering that the former were generally those in authority, and the latter those whom the authorities despised, the contrast is very striking. It is scarcely the conduct we should expect. Men are generally afraid of their tenderness to the sinful being interpreted to mean tenderness, as it often does mean, to themselves. And such outspoken boldness in dealing with those who wielded the power of life and death, and had few scruples, was not easy, is exceeding rare ;—nay, such as we find it in Christ surely is without parallel.

Com-  
mingling  
of severity  
and ten-  
derness  
in Christ.

*c. Still another feature of Christ's self-testimony* deserves attention. The moral development and state of men are co-determined chiefly by a double environment—that of the human race and that of God. They recognise their indebtedness to parents, friends, teachers, Church,

Christ  
confesses no  
indebted-  
ness to His  
environ-  
ment.

society in general; especially to the grace of God. A man who forgot to acknowledge this would seem to us in a bad sense self-sufficient. In the same measure we should count him less than perfect. What about Christ? Efforts have been made to point out His *general* indebtedness to His natural, His national, and His home environment,—an indebtedness including also His moral characteristics; but His own recorded utterances supply us with no gauge whatever for determining that indebtedness. He never speaks of owing anything to parents, teachers, friends; men at all—never! Not even does He refer in grateful terms to the religious institutions, traditions, and literature of His people. They testify of Him; He confirms or corrects them; but does He confess to owing aught to them?

Nor does He recognise dependence on God after a human manner.

He does not even speak as men do—as pious Israelites had been wont to do—of depending on the help and grace of God. It is true He tells us that His words were given Him to speak, and His works to do, by the Father; that He does nothing and speaks nothing of Himself. Not only, however, does He also claim to speak and do Himself what God wills Him to speak and do, but the form of expression employed by Him is not one that could occur or be possible to any mere man. There is a combination of loftiness and lowliness of claim, which both

startles and puzzles until we find the key in the thought that He is the Word become flesh.

What has just been advanced may seem inconsistent with His spending whole nights in prayer to God (Matt. xiv. 23; Mark i. 35; vi. 46; Luke vi. 12).

But if we may judge by the tone and manner of His various injunctions to pray, still more by His own recorded prayers, they can scarcely have been of the kind appropriate to weak, erring, sinful men. In enjoining prayer on others He makes no reference to His own example and experience; yet how natural, how forcible, how encouraging it would have been! And the longest of His recorded prayers (John xvii.) not only contains nothing to remind us of the prayers of ordinary men, but is crowded with thoughts and expressions that would be listened to with amazement, not to say indignation, were they to fall from the lips of an ordinary man.

Extra-ordinary character of His recorded prayers.

d. On the other hand, we find Him advancing claims and permitting Himself conduct which in any one else would be counted, to say the least, very peculiar; as well as doing and saying things which to many appear incompatible with sinless, ideal perfection.

Examples of the former have already been



adduced, but they have a bearing on Christ's moral character which merits special remark.

His claims  
on men's  
service and  
sacrifice  
remarkable.

We regard any man as egotistic, selfish, self-sufficient, who calls on his fellow-men to speak or do or suffer, or to neglect doing or speaking or suffering for his sake beyond a certain limit.

Even within very narrow limits we resent it if he do so in a certain way, and in any case readily judge him to be exacting. We may think it our duty freely to render service or make sacrifices, but a *demand* for service or sacrifice lowers a person morally in our eyes. Beyond certain limits we should laugh such claims to scorn. The man who advanced them, if we did not count him insane, would be set down as presumptuous, and what not else?

What about Christ? Was He presumptuous, self-seeking, designing, self-sufficient, egotistic? If not, why not?

Then again He acts and speaks in ways that, to say the least, are perplexing.

Perplexing  
words and  
acts of  
Christ.

Some have criticised our Lord's conduct with regard to the permission given to the *daimonia* to enter into the swine of the Gadarenes, and the consequent injury to their property; or to the curse by which the barren fig tree was withered, so that it could no longer even gladden the eye by its foliage, much less have a chance of producing fruit another season.

Others have felt difficulty about His unsympathetic treatment—as it is considered by them—of His mother at the marriage at Cana of Galilee; and of both mother and brethren, when having been told, ‘Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren are standing without, *desiring to speak* with Thee,’ He replied, ‘Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren’ (Matt. xii. 47–49; cf. Mark iii. 33, 34). Again, His casting out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrowing the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, as Matthew reports it (ch. xxi. 12, 13); or, as John describes the scene, His driving out the sellers of oxen and sheep and doves with a scourge of small cords; and His pouring out the changers’ money and overthrowing their tables (ch. ii. 15), which is regarded as betraying a great amount of indignant anger or temper. Further, His terrible scathing denunciations of Scribes and Pharisees in the house of a certain Pharisee with whom He had been asked to dine, which are condemned by some as showing an utter disregard of times and seasons, as marked by the ‘shrill rage of vituperation’ (Luke vii. 36–47), and as quite unbecoming ‘the relation between host and guest.’ The

Incidents which are supposed to reflect on Christ's moral character.

solemn reproaches launched by Him at Nazareth against the perverseness of Israel, which are characterised as an 'outburst and utterance more of temper than of love' (Luke iv. 16-29); and finally, the injunction, 'Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you' (Matt. vii. 6), is described as 'an ebullition of scorn and insult,' unworthy of and incredible in Him who 'selected a Samaritan as the ideal expounder of the second great commandment.'<sup>1</sup>

A perplex-  
ing anti-  
thesis.

Are we not here face to face with a perplexing antithesis? On the one hand, as we have seen, Christ claims to be perfect, according to the standard of the Heavenly Father, to have glorified the Father, not surely merely by miracles or teaching or suffering, but also by acting and behaving as befitted the Son of God; on the other, He does and says things which in a mere man—were his gifts the most eminent, the truth he taught the most profound and weighty, the influence he wielded most powerful, were he indeed in every way most distinguished—would be condemned as interferences with common human rights, and violations of the wisdom, tact, and courtesy which ought to govern human intercourse.

<sup>1</sup> See Martineau, *Seat of Authority in Religion*, p. 597-599.

What shall we say of these things in the case of Christ? Shall we, with the writer already quoted, deny that He ever acted, spake, and behaved as represented; and say that whilst the narratives doubtless contain an element of truth, they are decidedly 'tinctured' with the 'bitterness' which marked the post-apostolic Christian attitude towards the Jews? or what shall we do?

To adopt this course is clearly to discredit the accuracy of the Gospel narrators; that, too, in obedience to a preconceived notion of Christ which involves not only the rejection of a great deal more—indeed, of by far the larger part of what has been advanced,—but also the denial of that personal divinity of Christ which has constituted the central feature of the Christian faith and the chief corner-stone of the Christian life and hope.

Perplexity increased by discrediting the narratives.

For my own part I can see no way out of this and other kindred difficulties, but by frankly putting into the very foreground of our faith and theology the fact that Christ was the Eternal Word who had become flesh for the purpose of reconciling God and man, by His life, death, resurrection, and ascension. As long as the emphasis continues to be laid on the humanity of Christ, particularly on His conduct and life as an example which pleases the pre-

The true and only solution of the perplexity.

sent moment, a large proportion of His words and works—particularly those that have been just referred to—must remain a serious stumbling-block, and cannot but prove favourable to the inroads of mere humanitarianism.

*Christ was the Son of God who came in supreme love and condescension to rescue the world which belonged to Him,—the world in which no man or body of men had any but derived rights or claims, and over all the parts of which, therefore, He had absolute right to treat as should seem fit for the furtherance of the mission He had undertaken :—*WHO THEN ARE WE TO CRITICISE OR OBJECT?

(vi) Whilst plainly distinguishing between the Father and Himself, He also assumes *relations between the Father and Himself* that are unintelligible save on the supposition of His own divinity.

Relations  
assumed  
between the  
Father and  
Himself.

The following are a few of the cases :—‘ All things are delivered unto Me of My Father : and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him ’ (Matt. xi. 27 ; cf. Luke x. 22) ; ‘ As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him ’ (John xvii. 2) ; ‘ All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth ’ (Matt. xxviii. 18) ;

‘The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works’ (Matt. xvi. 27); ‘The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son’ (John v. 22; cf. v. 27); ‘All things that the Father hath are Mine’ (John xvi. 15); ‘All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them’ (John xvii. 10).

God’s functions  
His functions.

Further:—‘The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth’ (John v. 19, 20); ‘That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him’ (John v. 23).

God’s works  
His works.

Still further:—‘This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, *and* Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent’ (John xvii. 3).

Again:—‘If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also’ (John xiv. 7); ‘Then said they unto Him, Where is Thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know Me nor My Father; if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also’ (John viii. 19); ‘He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me; and he that seeth Me,

To know  
Him is to  
know God.

seeth Him that sent Me' (John xii. 44, 45); 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9).

Again:—'Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee' (John xvii. 1).

The Father  
in Him, and  
He in the  
Father.

Still further:—'If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him' (John x. 37, 38; cf. xiv. 10, 11, 20); 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one' (John x. 28-30).

Christ  
claims to  
have life in  
Himself.

And finally:—'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself' (John v. 25, 26).

Summary  
of the extra-  
ordinary  
powers  
claimed by  
Him.

What extraordinary powers to claim! The power to know God as God knows Him; all power; the power to judge all men. All that belongs to God belongs to Him; God shows Him all things He doeth; men are to honour Him as



they honour the Father ; eternal life is constituted not by knowing God only, but also Jesus Christ whom He hath sent ; to see and know Him is to see and know the Father ; the Father glorifies Him as He glorifies the Father ; the Father and He are one ; and last of all, He is endowed with the true absoluteness, viz. that of having life in Himself.

In what other way could Christ have placed himself alongside of God, or, as the Jews charged Him with doing, make Himself equal with God, save by expressly teaching what John taught, that He was the incarnate Logos who was in the beginning with God, and was God ?

How otherwise could Christ have placed Himself alongside of God ?

That He distinguishes Himself from the Father, yea, even from God, is of course plain enough. Had He not done so, His words and acts would have no bearing on the Trinity. That He frequently refers directly as well as indirectly to a certain subordination to the Father or to God ; that He behaves in ways—for example, prayer ; and uses language—for example, in His question to the rich young ruler, ‘ Why callest thou Me good ? There is none good but one, God,’—that suggest His being merely human, is also clear. But the difficulty thence arising disappears when it is remembered that incarnation was impossible without the self-emptying of which Paul speaks in Philippians ; whilst no

Distinction from and a certain subordination to the Father.

rational explanation whatever is possible, even of the distinction he draws between Himself and God, much less of the assumptions just referred to, were He not more than man; yea, more than any conceivable creature. For a creature, whether human or angelic, to use language such as 'My Father is greater than I,' would be as ludicrous in its presumption, as for it to say, 'I and My Father are one,' would be monstrous.

The Holy Spirit according to Christ.

(3) The *Holy Spirit* is indirectly and directly spoken of by Christ in a way that conveys the impression that *He acts in a personal way*; that *He stands in a unique relation to the Father or God, no less than to Himself*; and that *He wields divine power*.

The Spirit manifested Himself at Christ's baptism.

(i) The Holy Ghost, who co-operated at the conception of the Son of God, manifested Himself at His baptism by John, as we read, 'Jesus also being baptised, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased' (Luke iii. 21, 22; cf. Matt. iii. 16, 17).

Immediately after His baptism, 'Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted of the devil' (Luke iv. 1; cf.

Matt. iv. 1; Mark i. 12). After the forty days' temptation was accomplished, 'Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee' (Luke iv. 14).

These were personal experiences of Christ which it is most natural to suppose He Himself communicated to the disciples.

(ii) Christ recognises the action of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times when He speaks as follows:—'What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David *in spirit* call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?' (Matt. xxii. 42-44; cf. Mark xii. 36).

Christ recognises the Spirit's action in the Old Testament.

Similarly, His action is recognised in the case of Simeon—a circumstance probably known to the disciples through Christ:—'Simeon was a just man and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ' (Luke ii, 25, 26).

His action recognised in Simeon.

The reference to the Holy Spirit—'How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?' (Luke xi. 13)—is too indefinite to have an independent value in the present connection.

The Holy Spirit and the second birth.

(iii) There is more definiteness in the allusion to His connection with the second birth: 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he is not able to enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . . The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit' (John iii. 5-8). As also in the words 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you' (Matt. x. 20); 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them,' &c. (John xx. 22, 23). So, too, when Christ said to the Nazarenes, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor,' &c. (Luke iv. 18; cf. Is. xlii. 7). At the same time the advance beyond certain modes of expression found in the Old Testament is not marked enough to warrant much stress being laid on them. Yet it is surely correct to say that they point forward to something more definite.

Other activities of the Holy Spirit.

(iv) Unless Christ were chargeable with a double accommodation, He recognised the personal action no less of the Holy Spirit than of Beelzebub, when He replies to the Pharisees who had said, 'This fellow doth not cast out demons

but by Beelzebub, the chief of the demons,' 'If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your children cast them out? But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you' (Matt. xii. 24-28).

A near approach is made to the proper recognition of the Spirit as at once divine and personal in the following places:—'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come' (Matt. xii. 31, 32; cf. Mark iii. 28, 29; Luke xii. 10). The co-ordination of the Spirit with Himself, alike as to personality and divinity, seems beyond doubt.

The blasphemy  
against the  
Holy Spirit.

Still more are personality and personal action ascribed to the Spirit in the following passages:—'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you' (John xiv. 26); 'When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from

Personality  
of the  
Comforter.

Personal  
activities  
ascribed to  
the Com-  
forter.

the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me ; and ye also bear witness' (John xv. 26, 27) ; 'It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment' (John xvi. 7, 8) ; 'Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth : for He shall not speak of Himself ; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak : and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me : for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you' (John xvi. 13, 14) ; 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matt. xxviii. 19).

Summary  
of the evi-  
dence bear-  
ing on the  
Holy Spirit.

If the Holy Spirit can come, can be sent, can teach, testify, recall to memory, produce conviction of moral states and realities, guide into truth, glorify Christ, receive from Christ and show to believers what He has received, the conclusion that He is personal seems forced on us by the authority of Christ Himself ; and in view not only of that which is ascribed to Him, but the mode in which He is associated with the Father and Christ, it is most natural to con-

ceive of Him as sharing in the divinity of both.

I cannot do better than close this incomplete presentation of the testimony furnished by the birth, words, acts, and whole conduct of Christ to the fact of the triune constitution of the Godhead, with the quotation of the passage in which the final scene of His earthly mission is presented to us:—‘And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth.** Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of *the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever I commanded you*: and, lo, **I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**’ (Matt. xxviii. 18–20).

It is incredible that if Christ spake these words, He and the Holy Spirit should not essentially and personally stand in the relation to the Father which the Church has from the beginning endeavoured to express in its faith, prayers, worship, creeds, and theology; and which the Apostle Paul plainly alludes to when he writes, ‘The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen’ (2 Cor. xiii. 14).



### III. THE TRINITY IN THE THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE OF THE PERSONAL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

A few general remarks with regard to *the Trinity in the Thought and Language of the Personal Disciples of Christ* will form a fitting conclusion to these pages, though to deal with the subject at length is impossible within the limits imposed on the writer.

The  
Apostles left  
no formu-  
lated state-  
ment as to  
the Trinity.

Surprise has often been expressed, and still oftener felt without being expressed, that the personal disciples of our Lord, including the apostle Paul, should have left behind, so far as is known, no formulated statement of their conception of the relation between 'God' or 'the Father' and 'Jesus Christ' and 'the Holy Spirit.' The nearest approach to such a statement is that of John in the prologue to his Gospel—for, of course, that is obviously his. They refer distinctly enough to God the Father, to the Lord the Son, to the Holy Ghost, each separately. The terms employed to characterise the Lord the Son and the Holy Ghost—*explicitly* as to Their functions and works, and *implicitly* as to Their nature—are certainly such as to suggest divinity; both are practically co-ordinated with the Father; and yet no such doctrine is propounded as the Christian Church at a very early date found itself impelled, both from

References  
to the  
several  
persons  
distinct.

within and without, to set forth. Great and constant use is made of the fact now noted by those who controvert the doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ and of the personal Trinity of God.

In treating of the allusions to Messiah in the Old Testament I remarked that even the greatest of the prophets seemed to be unconscious of the fact that they were ascribing to the future Deliverer of their nation qualities and functions which they themselves must have pronounced incompatible, had they examined them in the light of their general conception of God. Yet they could not have regarded Him as the Deliverer, had the qualities and functions not somehow or other met in Him.

The disciples of Christ were in much the same position,—with the difference, of course, that whereas the prophets had merely a promised and pictured ideal before them, the disciples had seen and heard and handled the realisation. Accordingly their references were no longer determined or coloured, as would seem to have been the case with the prophets, by suggestions due to the past history and present and prospective needs of the nation; but they report—simply report. Naturally, too, what they report is less dim, less general; it is individual, concrete, definite, tangible; but for

Analogy  
between the  
relation of  
the Pro-  
phets to  
Messiah and  
that of  
Apostles to  
Christ.

that reason fuller, richer in the elements that, looked at superficially, seem inconsistent with each other; though when studied as a whole they point towards and find their reconciliation in the conception of God as triune.

The eyes of the disciples in a sense holden.

In a very true sense one may say of the disciples in this connection also, 'Their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.' Had they 'known' Him, not a few of the features of Christ's person, work, and life which might have been overlooked; or which, from lack of a kind of thought which it was not in their power to bestow, might have been smoothed over; have been, instead, set before us *just as they were*. Nor has any effort been made to avoid the appearance of inconsistency, which it is so natural for believers and admirers to dread, and which as a matter of fact theologians of all schools have ever since been endeavouring to remove.

Elements suggestive alike of divinity and humanity naively reported.

Elements which suggest divinity and elements which seem entirely human are reported in all *naïveté*, and yet at the same time they continue to speak of 'God' and 'the Father,' essentially as they had learned to do before they knew Christ, though with greater warmth and intensity. In fact, it was their *conception* of God, enriched though it had been and was being from day to day through Christ, that *held their eyes* from seeing God in Christ. Analogously, the

conception of God which *possesses* Christian men now-a-days, without being *possessed* by them, may be said to hold their eyes in the presence of the wonders, mysteries, and glories of the natural world, through which God is constantly looking out upon and speaking to us, as He looked out on Moses from the cloud.

It is well for the Christian Church that this is the character of the apostolic testimony. Nothing could bear stronger evidence of their own truthfulness, and of the objective accuracy of their utterances. **They represented their Lord as they found Him ; and yet they spoke of the God-head as they had been taught.** Those who take their stand, in a literalistic, hard spirit, first and chiefly on the allusions to God, are naturally tempted to treat the references to Christ's functions which involve divinity as orientalisms or exaggerations ; or else to water them down in some other way. But if we try reverently, yet with fullest intensity, to combine both classes of allusions to Christ in one higher conception and expression, we shall find that, instead of excluding, they require and illumine each other.

Christ represented as they found Him, God as they had learnt of Him.

The two elements form a higher unity.

So far as the Gospels, which have supplied the material for the last sections, were the work of the disciples of Christ, it has been urged that in reality they set forth, not the objective actuality

Personal  
equation  
and inspira-  
tion do not  
exclude  
each other.

but their subjective experience and thought,—at all events, in part. To a certain extent this may be the case; the personal equation need not be denied even when inspiration is affirmed; but the former must not be emphasised at the expense of the objective truth of the representation of Christ; otherwise we shall be dealing, not with the Christ as He *was*, but with the Christ as He was *imagined*,—in other words, with an altogether uncertain figure; and the quest we have been undertaking is vain.

Differences  
in the  
representa-  
tions of  
Christ, due  
to indi-  
viduality.

Inspiration, whilst evoking, quickening, and invigorating the individuality of each of the evangelists, also so aided his memory and clarified his vision as that he set his Master before us, each so far as he went, just as He was. But inasmuch as each doubtless saw something which the other failed to see, and had an experience differing in some respect or other from that of his fellow-disciple, the picture drawn by the one could not well be identical with that drawn by the other. Yet inasmuch as all had the veritable Christ actually before them, and represented what belonged to the Christ—the Christ to whom John referred when he wrote with such passionate emphasis, ‘That which we have *heard*, which we have *seen* with our *eyes*, which we have *looked* upon, and our *hands* have *handled*’ (1 John i. 1),—they reported and described

truly, though each according to his individuality; their pens set down what their eyes saw and ears heard, whether they understood or not, just as other men now do every day with regard to other things.

In certain parts of all the Gospels, notably, however, in that of John, and in the rest of the writings of the New Testament, we have to do with a more complex process. Their writers give us inferences from inner experiences which, though undoubtedly drawn under the influence and by the aid of what they remembered of the Saviour as they knew Him on earth, were still *inferences*, and being such, necessarily to some extent differed from *descriptions* of Him with whom they companied, ate, and drank.

The process in some parts of the Gospels complex.

In this respect, the plane on which they move is more like that of the Old Testament writers whose testimony was reviewed, with the difference, that whereas the utmost that was vouchsafed to the most favoured of the latter was a passing theophany, or vision, or dream, or word, or miracle, or marvellous combination of events; the New Testament writers had lived with the Incarnate Word as one of themselves. The latter, therefore, infer with far greater certainty, and judge with far greater accuracy, than was possible to the former; besides that a larger measure of the inspiring

Comparison between Old and New Testament writers.

influence of the Holy Spirit could be and therefore was brought to bear upon them, than their compeers of the earlier dispensation were able to receive.

Elements  
which com-  
bined to  
produce  
the result  
before us.

Several elements combined to produce the result with which we have to deal:—first, their personal remembrance of the Master, and of the experiences they owed to Him whilst they ‘*compained together*’ in Judea; next, the experiences after His departure, which they traced to His continuous working—a working which, because not associated with His visible presence, was reasoned about analogically; further, their observation of the effects produced in Jews and Gentiles alike who believed in Him, and of whom it could be said in the words of Peter, ‘*in whom, though now they see Him not yet, believing they rejoice, receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls;*’ and finally, a direct self-demonstration or impression of Himself in, with, and through forms of experience, of the kind perhaps to which Paul refers, when he speaks of the revelation of the *Son in him*. To untwine these various strands is impossible, though at one moment and in one case the one may be more prominent, at another moment and in another case the other.



CULTURE  
AND  
CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE  
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'HEREDITY AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY;' 'MODERN SCEPTICISM  
COMPARED WITH CHRISTIAN FAITH;' 'SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY;'  
ETC. ETC.



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:  
56 PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

## Argument of the Tract.

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THE Tract starts with describing the attitude of those who believe in 'the saving power of culture,' as being that of condescension rather than opposition towards Christianity, which they regard still as the best moral teacher of the vulgar; whereas the 'Religion of Culture' claims to be more enlightened, more modern, and more comprehensive. Two tendencies are distinguished in the movement: that represented by M. Arnold, which considers culture as the equivalent to, and that represented by the Neo-Pagan school, which regards it as the substitute for, the Christian religion.

The Tract indicates the weakness inherent in culture as a power to direct the activities of life, acknowledged by some of its most prominent advocates, such as Pater and Symonds, and from it argues the need of a virile faith in alliance with it. It then states the claims of Christianity as a civilising force, and shows what *literary*, *scientific*, and *art* culture owe to its co-operating and correcting influences, giving historical proofs of the foregoing, by way of illustration.

In the next place the Tract endeavours to indicate the true relation between Culture and Religion: (1) in assigning to literary culture its true place as subordinate to, not co-ordinate with, Christianity as a power for directing thought, stimulating feeling, and bracing up the will in the higher life of man; (2) in reference to the supposed conflict between science and religion, pointing to such examples as Kepler and Newton, Faraday and Romanes, and quoting the words from such modern authorities as Tyndall and Huxley to show that the pursuit of scientific culture and the cultivation of religion are not incompatible, but that the search after scientific and divine truth, if conducted with modesty, moderation and the spirit of mutual toleration, tends to mutual profit; (3) in answer to the question whether Christianity gives scope to art culture the Tract shows that true art may exercise a refining and idealizing influence, conjointly with and ancillary to religion, and so may furnish the means of greater completeness in human life and character.

In summing up, the Tract concludes with pointing out that Christianity has nothing to fear from the spread of 'sweetness and light;' that, on the contrary, culture, as the 'study of perfection,' duly relegated to its proper place, may, in conjunction with the cultivation of the religious temper of mind as 'Christian culture,' assist in the final attainment by man to the knowledge and the love of God.

## CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY.

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THE dictum of the 'most cultured man of the century'—Goethe—was, 'He who has Art and Science has Religion ; who has them not, let him possess Religion.'

Attitude  
of the  
'cultured'  
mind.

This expresses also the attitude of mind on the part of many who term themselves cultured towards Christianity in the present day. Of a great intellectual leader in the last century, Voltaire, it could be said that he had 'no ear for the finer vibrations of the spiritual voice.' Some of the foremost men of our own day in literature, science, and art, on the contrary, boast of their recovery of 'spirituality,' as the result of progressive culture.<sup>1</sup> But by spirituality they do not mean what spiritually-minded Christians understand by it. Yet their attitude towards Christianity is not that of

<sup>1</sup> See an article on 'The Progress of Thought in our Time,' by J. Addington Symonds, in the Jubilee number of the *Fortnightly Review*, June, 1887, *passim*.

Claim of  
culture as  
superior  
moral force.

contention, but rather that of condescension. As a substitute for culture in the mass of the illiterate, the Christian religion may, they think, still serve a purpose as a means of moral culture, though it has become obsolete as a moral force among 'the cultured few.' Within the magic circle of these, the 'saving power of culture' is the paramount power for developing character, the principal instrument for enriching human life. Thus the author of *Natural Religion*, in his endeavour to heal the breach between what he calls the 'culture' of our time and the inherited faith, in the chapter headed 'Religion and Culture,' describes their mutual relationship as follows :

Religion in  
culture.

'What is this new thing—"culture"? and what relation does it bear to the familiar thing—"religion"? If we might judge by the utterances of its adherents, it is not dissimilar or unfriendly to religion; but somehow more enlightened and modern, so that it speaks another dialect even when it would express the same truths. Moreover it is understood to be much more comprehensive, and, in fact, to deal principally with matters of a different kind. It is concerned more with art and science than with self-sacrifice or charity' (p. 143).

Thus, as he goes on to show, culture assumes the character of a religion, yet with a distinction. 'Religion has been revived under the artificial name of culture; . . . the substance of religion is culture, and the fruit of it the higher life.'

And this in spite of essential differences.

‘Culture is properly a direction given to the development of life, but religion is the principle of life itself. . . . Culture, again, is a word which seems to describe the privilege of a favoured few; and yet to withstand secularity we need a mighty popular force.’ Nevertheless the fact remains.

Distinguishing marks of culture and religion.

‘If we look at the history of the modern theory of culture, we shall perceive that its characteristic feature is precisely the assertion of the religious dignity of Art and Science. That German gospel which the Puritan Carlyle preached to us with a solemnity which seemed scarcely appropriate to it, was an assertion of Beauty and Truth as deserving to be worshipped along with Duty. Goethe and Schiller habitually apply the language of religion to Art, and in the whole school which they represent may be traced an impulse to create a new organisation for the worship of Beauty and Truth,—worships omitted, as they held, in Christianity’ (pp. 145, 146).

Worship of Beauty and Truth.

Again,—

‘Culture is summed up by Goethe in a formula—*Life is in the Whole, in the Good, in the Beautiful*. Here Morality, under the name of Life in the Good, stands between Art, which is Life in the Beautiful, and Science, or the Knowledge of the law of the Universe, which is Life in the Whole’ (p. 147).

The author then proceeds to show that as a system Culture tries to combine ‘three forms of religion,’ which correspond to the three stages of human development; the ‘higher Paganism,’ when mankind was in its childhood, primitive

Christianity, when it had attained to youth, and the age of Science, as the latest phase of 'the higher life' in the maturity of old age. From which it would appear that the simplicity of childhood and the gaiety of youth having been left behind, we have now reached the stage of perfected knowledge, but only to become more conscious of the limitations of knowledge: we must sadly resign ourselves to worship an unknown God in the temple of nature, and try to lead a higher life under the combined influence of the three forms of culture just enumerated. Christianity still exercises a joint influence, but only as 'Natural Christianity,' *i. e.* naturalised Christianity incorporated in the religion of culture. Thus the cult of genius takes the place of the saint-worship in the Roman Church, and the civilising influences of the Renaissance are placed far above those of the Reformation, whilst the cultivation of science remains as the main, if not the only, avenue to truth.

Such, broadly stated, are the claims of modern culture. It will be readily understood, therefore, that by culture we do not here mean some of its spurious counterfeits and fantastic caricatures, which made even such a writer as Frederic Harrison say some years ago, 'Perhaps the very silliest cant of the day is the cant of culture.' Nor do we refer here to 'the great

F. Harrison  
on 'cant of  
culture.'

æsthetic epidemic,' as some one stigmatises it, we are at present suffering from under the name of culture; but we mean that genuine and all-absorbing love of knowledge and beauty which has been described by Dr. Martineau as 'the zealous care for the higher types of human thought and feeling,' a zeal which 'is spent upon the highest elements of civilisation,—the increase of knowledge, the refinement and sincerity of art, the purification of religion;' and which 'secures, therefore, a genuine liberality of mind, a sympathy with whatever makes man intelligent, gracious, and noble.'<sup>1</sup>

Dr.  
Martineau  
on higher  
culture.

Regarding it from this point of view, culture presents two aspects. (1) We see it put sometimes on the same pedestal with religion as an equivalent factor of civilisation. (2) It is held up at other times as a rival or opponent, trying to absorb religion into itself or to supplant it.

## I. TWO TENDENCIES OF MODERN CULTURE.

(1) No one has done more in recent times, and in this and other English-speaking countries, to promulgate this first view than Matthew Arnold. He has been called the Apostle of Culture, and it is to him, its ac-

<sup>1</sup> *Types of Ethical Theory*, 2nd edit., vol. ii, pp. 211, 213, 214.



credited champion, that we naturally turn for an exposition of its character and scope. We find it in his well-known work on *Culture and Anarchy*. In it he speaks of himself as 'a believer in culture,' and professes to act as a guide for finding some plain grounds on which a 'faith in culture' may rest securely.

M. Arnold  
on culture  
as a creed.

What, then, in his view, are the *credenda* and *agenda* of this 'faith in culture'? We are told that culture is a 'pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know the best which has been taught and said in the world' on all matters which do most concern us. It has also a moral end in view, for it is 'the study of perfection.' Thus with him it 'coincides with religion.' Both describe the process of perfection as 'an inward operation,' and both together aim 'to make reason and the will of God prevail' (a favourite quotation from Bishop Wilson's *Maxims*). But we are also told that 'culture goes beyond religion,' *i.e.* as religion is generally 'conceived by us,' inasmuch as its aims are more comprehensive. It tries to bring about the 'harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature,' whereas certain forms of popular religion in their narrow provincialism do not admit of this harmonious development. Culture, too, we are told, has a social and political

mission. Its function consists in mellowing down the asperities of political partisanship, in softening the character of free citizens whose chief guide consists in 'doing what they like,' in restraining the democratic force and violence of 'the populace' by the refining influence of culture. It thus becomes '*an inward spiritual activity, having for its character increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy.*'<sup>1</sup> 'The men of culture are the apostles of equality' as well, for it is not satisfied 'till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light.'<sup>2</sup> In its opposition to the anarchical tendency of unlimited freedom, culture 'begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarised, even if it cannot save the present' (p. 13).

Culture defined.

In short, the great object of culture is to raise the community intellectually, morally, spiritually, especially the middle class, which is too easily satisfied with a defective type of

Aims of culture.

<sup>1</sup> *Culture and Anarchy* (popular edition, 1893), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pages 3, 30, 31.

religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of morals,—in short, ‘an inferior type of social life and civilisation.’

We must not, however, go away with the idea that this amounts to a belief in ‘salvation by erudition,’ for Matthew Arnold does allow room for the religious, or what he calls the Hebraistic element in moral culture, though his chief aim is to procure a wider range for the Hellenistic or intellectual factor in human development.

Hebraism  
and  
Hellenism.

(2) For a description of the second view about the mission of culture we must look elsewhere, and we shall find it among the uncompromising laudators of classical culture revived in the Renaissance, and held in high honour by writers of the ‘Neo-pagan’ school in the present day: The earlier and the later Renaissance are both influenced by scientific discoveries, and by those materialistic views of man and nature to which they have given rise. Thus Mr. Symonds, in his well-known volumes on the Italian Renaissance, now after twenty years in course of republication, tells us concerning the Platonic Academy of Florence, which was the ‘centre of this search after the faith of culture,’ that its ‘real merit was originality, and the true force [of it] lay in the conviction that humanity is

Neo-pagan  
view of  
culture.

Mr.  
Symonds on  
culture of  
the Re-  
naissance.

one and indivisible.’<sup>1</sup> ‘Seeking to fuse together the vitality of the old faith, and the forms of novel culture,’ it ended in ‘worshipping a Deity created in the image of its own mind, composite and incoherent.’ A less favourable view of the ‘Dilettante-Paganism’ of the same movement is presented to our mind by Dr. Lupton in his recent *Life of Dean Colet*. Hellenists, like Cosmo, Ficino, and others, we are told, manifested a disposition ‘to betake themselves to the fanciful theories of Plato instead of to the cross of Christ for comfort;’ and what followed was a ‘severance of religion from morality,’ ‘latent infidelity engendered by corruption’ (pp. 52, 53).

Plato and Christ, as teachers.

It is only fair, however, to bear in mind, as M. Gaston Boissier, of the French Academy, has shown in his recent work on *The End of Paganism*, that the assimilation of antique thought by the representatives of the new creed on the one hand, and the infusion of the fresh energy of Christianity into the spirit of classical learning on the other, opened out for it a new literary era, so that ‘all the world profited by it, profane as well as sacred, letters made progress, and every branch of literature revived.’

Assimilation of Pagan Literature with Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> *Renaissance in Italy*, pp. 23, 24; cf. Owen, *Sceptics of the Italian Renaissance*, in the earlier chapters of the volume.

Mr. Pater  
on the  
union of  
Pagan  
culture and  
Chris-  
tianity.

No one has done more, or done it more ably, in describing this amalgamation of ancient culture with the new leaven of Christianity, than the late Mr. Pater, both in his *Marius the Epicurean*, and his last and unfinished work, *Gaston de la Tour*. In both he describes the 'wistful desire for perfection' of his respective heroes. But without intending it he shows at the same time that, by this attempt to weld into one the semi-sensuous philosophy and poetry of Paganism and the mystic and spiritual elements of Christianity, an ideal is produced not rising much higher than a purified Epicureanism. The following passage well illustrates this :—

'*Marius the Epicurean*.

'From that maxim of *life as the end of life*, followed as a practical consequence the desirableness of refining all the instruments of inward and outward intuition, of developing all their capacities, of testing and exercising oneself in them till one's whole nature becomes a complex medium of reception towards the vision—the "beatific vision," if we really cared to make it such—of an actual experience of the world. Not the conveyance of an abstract body of truths or principles would be the aim of this right education of oneself or of another, but the conveyance of an art,—an art in some degree peculiar to each individual character, with the modifications, that is, due to its special constitution and the circumstances of its growth, inasmuch as no one of us is "like another" all in all.'

'Pitched to a really high and serious key, the precept *Be perfect in regard to what is here and now*—the precept of "culture" as it is called, or of a complete education—might at least save him [*i. e.* Marius] from the vulgarity

and heaviness of a generation certainly of no general fineness of temper, though with a material well-being abundant enough.'<sup>1</sup>

Here was the 'most dexterous training of his capacities,' and the contemplation of what is beautiful became a 'sort of religious service.' But what there is of force and fervour fails in prompting action; it all goes towards generating 'impassioned contemplation.'

To turn to the case of Gaston de la Tour, living at the time of the French Renaissance. When challenged by the secular literature of Ronsard,—as by a rival new religion then coming into vogue 'to supersede the religion he knew,—to identify himself conclusively with this so tangible world, its suppositions, its issues, its risks,' what was the result? He, a man devoted to the Church, having even received the tonsure, felt that—

*Gaston de la Tour.*

'Here was a world, certainly, which did not halt in meditation, but prompted one to make actual trial of it, with a liberty of heart which might likely enough traverse this or that precept . . . of his earlier conscience. . . . Two worlds, two antagonistic ideals, were in evidence before him. Could a third condition supervene to mend their discord, or only vex him, perhaps from time to time, with efforts towards an impossible adjustment?'

The adjustment amounts really to making the new world, *i.e.* the world of mundane interests

<sup>1</sup> *Marius the Epicurean*, sixth thousand, revised 1892, vol. i, pp. 154, 155, 157, 158.

and delights, take the paramount place, but this at the expense of the things immortal and eternal. The new religion—the religion of beauty—is finally adopted.

William  
Morris.

In the poetry of the late William Morris, the ‘singer of an idle day,’ the same tendency to languid enjoyment or contemplative inertia may be noticed, and his life’s lesson in view of the unavoidable end is this :

‘Death himself, who crying solemnly,  
E’en from the heart of sweet Forgetfulness,  
Bids us rejoice, lest pleasureless ye die,  
Within a little time must ye go by.  
Stretch forth your open hands, and while ye live  
Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give.’

Weakness  
of culture as  
a moral  
force.

It is unnecessary for our purpose to dwell on the literature and art of the French Decadence in order to point out the same feature of desultory weakness in a more exaggerated and less attractive form. Enough has been said to show that ‘the Religion of Culture’ fails as a force in directing the activities of life, and as a system of æsthetic philosophy is powerless as a solution of life’s problems, though it may help in humanising the affections and in directing the mind in search of an ideal.

Culture flourishes best therefore, we contend, when it is grafted on the mighty stem of Religion. It must partake of and be invigorated by its spiritual sap or life vigour, or else it will,



after a season of luxurious efflorescence, lapse, as it did in ancient Athens, Rome, and Alexandria, in Florence, and in modern Paris, into 'exotic fineness,' feebleness, and final decay, combined with the most hideous wickedness,—unless, indeed, revived by a fresh alliance with a virile faith.

'Here, then,' exclaims Amiel, 'is the service which Christianity—the Oriental element in our culture—renders to us Westerns. It checks and counterbalances our natural tendency towards the passing, the finite, the changeable, by fixing the mind upon the contemplation of eternal things, and by platonising our affections, which otherwise would have too little outlook upon the ideal world. Christianity leads us back from dispersion to concentration, from worldliness to self-recollection. It restores to our souls, fevered with a thousand sordid desires, nobleness, gravity, and calm. Just as sleep is a bath of refreshing for our actual life, so religion is a bath of refreshing for our immortal being. What is sacred has a purifying virtue ; religious emotion crowns the brow with an aureole, and thrills the heart with an ineffable joy.'<sup>1</sup>

Amiel on  
Christianity  
as its  
corrective.

Without, therefore, taking up the attitude of hostility towards culture, we would in the first

<sup>1</sup> *Amiel's Journal*, vol. i, p. 207.

place show what it owes to Christianity, and next, wherein its real power consists, in conjunction with and subordination to it. In short, it will be our object to assign to it its true place as one of the civilising influences in the divine economy in conjunction with, and in its proper relationship to, the religion of Christ. But before we proceed any further let us state once more what we mean by culture.

By culture, then, we mean that stage of general cultivation attained by a people at a particular moment of time, when its conception of the universe and of man, its standard of moral and religious, social and political life, has reached the highest level with its intellectual development. As the ideals of an age are profoundly influenced by its religious conceptions, religion must of necessity be one of the great factors in culture. For religion embraces the whole of life, and from a central position views the process of education, *i. e.* the successive stages of human culture, as stepping-stones to the higher life of the soul. Culture thus becomes a means to an end, that end being spiritual perfection as the supreme object of human endeavour. Thus Christianity has profoundly affected the course of culture, and through centuries has furnished culture with some of its most precious contents. It has

Christianity  
the  
promoter of  
culture.

stimulated its efforts, directed its course, and enabled it again and again to return to those higher ideals which had been lost sight of for a while, and has thus preserved it from sinking into the position of simply subserving the ends of a more or less refined materialism.

Christianity is not, therefore, as the author of *Natural Religion* would have it, 'identical with civilisation,' though civilisation owes a great debt to Christianity. This more especially in those lower strata of society which culture barely reaches. It was Christianity which conquered the barbarians of the Roman Empire in civilising them. Moreover, the aims of Culture and Christianity alike are the attainment of beauty, goodness, and truth. Culture and civilisation are satisfied with a relative attainment to these, as appertaining to the life that now is. The ultimate object of Christianity is to render the attainment helpful to the life of the soul, begun and continued here, but consummated hereafter. 'Religion in the individual,' in the opinion of the author of *Natural Religion* (pp. 201, 202), is 'identical with culture; religion in its public aspect . . . with civilisation. And as culture was shown to be a threefold devotion to beauty, goodness, and truth, it will appear that the term civilisation expresses the same threefold religion, shown

Aims of culture and religion identical.

But religion has higher objects in view.

Testimony  
of Gibbon.

Hallam.

Guizot.

Seeböhm.

Green.

Laveleye.

on a larger scale in the characters, institutions, and ways of lives and nations.' But whereas Christianity is co-extensive with and comprehensive of culture and civilisation, it extends beyond it. Sceptics like Gibbon have borne witness to the love of learning exhibited by the more cultured fathers of the Church. Hallam in his *Literary History*, and Guizot in his *Lectures on Civilisation*, have shown how the Christian Church became the depositary of ancient and the promoter of modern learning, how the indirect effects of the Crusades and the direct influence of the Benedictine love for classics helped forward the renaissance of ancient culture; and Mr. Seeböhm has shown how the Reformation helped on the revival of learning. Historians like Green have shown that even 'the higher and more elegant sides of Elizabethan culture harmonised well with the temper of the Puritan gentleman.'<sup>1</sup> Referring to Milton, Mr. Green shows 'how much of the gaiety, the poetic ease, the intellectual culture, of the Renaissance lingered in a Puritan home.' M. Emile de Laveleye has shown how the cause of education generally was advanced by Protestantism, because its leading principle made the study of the Bible—the Book—the subject of supreme importance; and

<sup>1</sup> *Short History of England*, p. 449, seq.

he might have added that literature has received an additional stimulus from the acquired habit of studying the 'sacred library,' *i. e.* the books contained in the Old and New Testaments. Nor should it be forgotten that Bacon and Spenser in science and poetry, as well as Colet and 'the Oxford Reformers' in the revival of classic literature, were influenced by the Christian love for free inquiry in promoting and engaging in these studies. In short, as Professor Christlieb in his work on *Modern Doubt* has pointed out, culture has its chief representatives among the Christian nations of Europe; it is here that it flourishes most vigorously. Indeed, in a sense Christianity may be called the fountain-head of modern culture.<sup>1</sup>

Christlieb  
on influence  
of  
Christianity  
in culture.

If ours, then, be 'the age of the brain and heart,' as Emerson tells us in his *Essay on Culture*, will not Christianity, which gave an asylum to the old culture when in danger of extinction by the incursion of the barbarians, now, when the danger has passed away, prove an equally efficacious promoter and protector of the new?

To answer this question we have now to consider the claims of Christianity as a civilising power in relation to (i) literary, (ii) scientific, and (iii) art culture respectively. The representatives

Relation of  
Christianity  
to culture.

<sup>1</sup> *Moderne Zweifel am christlichen Glauben* (2nd edit.), p. 45, *seq.*

of polished heathenism, old and new, since the time when Festus said to Paul, 'Much learning hath made thee mad,' and when the cultured men of Athens turned from him as a 'babbler,' have been but too ready to sneer at such pretensions of Christianity in appealing to the intellect of the cultured classes. It will be our endeavour now to show that culture in the three branches named above has much to gain and nothing to lose from an alliance with Christianity.

## II. CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY AS A CIVILISING POWER.

1. *What Literary Culture owes to, and may learn from, Christianity.*—Literary culture is the assimilation of the best thoughts of the best writers of all time as a means of correcting one-sided errors, of enlarging the range of ideas and sympathies, of quickening the sense of critical discernment. It thus tends to produce intellectual balance in those under its influence. As Emerson puts it—

Emerson on  
literary  
culture.

'Culture is the suggestion from certain best thoughts, that a man has a range of affinities, through which he can modulate the violence of any master-tones that have a drowning preponderance in his scale, and succour him against himself. Culture redresses his balance, puts him among his equals and superiors, revives the delicious sense

of sympathy, and warns him of the dangers of solitude and repulsion.’<sup>1</sup>

Moreover—

‘The foundation of culture, as of character, is at last the moral sentiment.’<sup>2</sup>

Thus it serves to educate the public mind as a pre-requisite in order to a more perfect social and political organisation. From this it will be seen that the aims of Christianity and those of Culture so far are identical; both are moral and educational forces, and the religious factor must of necessity be a very important one in effecting the social aims they have in view. Besides this there are certain acknowledged weaknesses in culture, and in these the co-operative force of religion is most important in correcting and supplementing the efforts of general culture. One of its most devoted advocates, Mr. J. A. Symonds, makes the following confession in his biography:

Importance of religion in its influence on culture.

‘Literature takes a second place in my estimation; and for this reason, although I have persevered in it for solace and escape from fretting care, I have never been able to regard it very seriously.’ And ‘how trivial literary successes and achievements are in comparison with the solid good things of a comely and contented existence! how little talent, or even genius, weighs in the scale against character, strength of will, goodness, and tranquillity of mind!’

<sup>1</sup> *Complete Works, Letters, &c.* (Bohn’s edit., 1879), vol. ii, pp. 365, 366, cf. 368.

<sup>2</sup> *Social Aims* (Golden Library edit., 1897), p. 174.



Insuf-  
ficiency of  
culture with  
the  
regene-  
rating  
power of  
Chris-  
tianity.

Accordingly we find him yearning for a return to the old faith ; he ' would give a great deal to regain the Christian point of view.' There is such a thing as ' overwrought culture,' where sceptical views of life are unsustained by deep religious convictions and the consolations of a lively faith. What the effects are which result from all this may be gathered from Max Nordau's book *Degeneration*, especially where he dwells on the literature of decadence. The sadness of Epicurean fatalism dwelt upon by F. W. H. Myers in his essay on *The Disenchantment of France*, and ' The Culture-complaint ' which close observers have noticed in Russian literature, are all evidences of the fact so often dwelt upon by such a sincere lover of culture as Ruskin, namely, that when literature becomes merely an intellectual luxury, and serves the purposes of self-indulgence, it either palls on jaded sensibilities or produces pessimistic weariness. Culture, if not under the influence of Christian humility to modify the pride of learning, is apt to indulge in an overweening sense of intellectual superiority, and becomes, as Comte has pointed out, selfish and unsocial. It is, in fact, under the dominating influence of ' the exclusive and aristocratic spirit of Greek culture,' or that Pharisaical pride of superior moral and intellectual attain-

Christianity  
and  
intellectual  
pride.

ment which said contemptuously of old, 'This people which knoweth not the law is accursed.' Self-culture becomes self-centred in isolating self-sufficiency, 'despising others;' it ends, in fact, in self-cultus. Christianity not being merely a sentiment, but a regenerating influence, aiming at change of heart, moves in a different plane; in Christ Jesus man is a new creature, not merely polished and refined intellectually, but radically changed in mind and heart, life and character.

To use the words of Amiel, 'Christianity brings and preaches salvation by the conversion of the will,—humanism by the emancipation of the mind. One attacks the heart, the other the brain: . . . the one wishes to enlighten by making better, the other to make better by enlightening. It is the difference between Socrates and Jesus;'<sup>1</sup>

Humanism  
and Chris-  
tianity.

and he shows that Christianity is the more essential of the two.

2. *What Scientific Culture owes to and may learn from Christianity.*—Scientific culture, as distinguished from the cultivation of letters, aims at an exact knowledge of facts, and of their relation to one another. By science we mean the organised knowledge of natural phenomena and of the laws by which they are governed. The cultivation of 'the ideality of

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, vol. i, pp. 19, 20. See also on this, chap. xxii, of *Marinus the Epicurean*, especially pp. 131–139, on the effect of the Christian Church on Roman culture in the age of the Antonines.

Ideal of  
scientific  
culture.

the scientific sense, an interest in science not merely dependent upon, nor limited by, practical aims, but as it ministers to the liberal education of the mind as such, the many-sided and broad exercise of the thinking faculty,' these are the professed functions of science. But scientific specialism, with its minute attention to detail as well as the study of scientific problems with a view to further discoveries, is apt to become narrow in its methods and pursuits, sacrificing breadth to detail and comprehensiveness of view to analytical accuracy. On the other hand, its aims are social. No doubt, as one who puts the case fairly on the respective merits of scientific and literary culture says, 'Culture as well as Science has its altruistic side. Society is the gainer by every complete unit that is added to it, and enriched by every ideal human creature.'<sup>1</sup>

Sociology  
the end of  
science.

The fact is, that in the modern classification of the sciences Sociology is put at the head, making all the rest tributary to the science of society, and, in the words of Comte, making 'sociology the crowning effort of the positivist philosophy.'<sup>2</sup> This shows to how great an extent modern science not only makes it its chief aim to arrive

<sup>1</sup> *Ideals of Culture*, by Edward A. Sonnenschein, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> See *A General View of Positivism*, translated from the French of Auguste Comte by J. H. Bridges, 2nd edit., pp. 96, 97, 210, 211.

at truth, but also, in doing so, tries to develop human character and to strengthen social sentiment, so as to promote 'social efficiency.' Beyond this even scientific culture extends its view to other subjects of interest.

'The field on which the victories of physical science have been won is teeming with problems of the widest bearing on many questions of the day—social, religious, and philosophical, as well as natural. To the scientific man belongs the "spirit of the great world brooding upon things to come." In a true sense, his is the future.'<sup>1</sup>

Accepting these claims without demur, we may ask how much does scientific culture owe to the stimulating, directing, and correcting influences of Christianity? The earnestness with which the latter appeals to the inquiring mind in search after spiritual truth, the humility it inculcates in conducting the process of reasoning, the sober sense and circumspection it recommends for the avoidance of error—have these not done much towards preserving modern men of science from the dangers and pitfalls which have been experienced in the past? Such dangers and pitfalls did prove fatal in the age of Greek inquiry, an age, too, which was one of great intellectual curiosity, bold theorising, but deficient in those qualities just mentioned; lacking, moreover, that seriousness of purpose which characterises all kinds

Christianity  
helps  
scientific  
inquiry.

<sup>1</sup> Sonnenschein, p. 49.

of mental effort under the Christian influence. For this reason the most important scientific discoveries synchronise with the first attempts of reforming the Christian Church. If the Byzantine suppression of 'profane learning' and the 'ecclesiastical hatred of humanistic learning' in the West did much in the way of retarding the progress of culture, the appeals made to individual responsibility, the right of private judgment, and the principle of personal freedom in matters of opinion indicated by the Reformers did much, too, to stimulate scientific research.

'It requires *patient industry*, and a *humble and conscientious acceptance* of what Nature reveals,' says Professor Tyndall of inductive inquiry: 'the first condition of success is an *honest receptivity*, and a willingness to abandon all preconceived notions, however cherished, if they be found to contradict the truth. Believe me, a *self-renunciation* which has something noble in it, and of which the world never hears, is often enacted in the private experience of the true votary of science.'

Now, we ask, is it not in the Christian religion where those very qualities we have put in italics are mostly found in greatest perfection? If then these are the most essential qualities as pre-requisites to scientific discovery, Christianity furnishes the best materials for the making of truly scientific men. Mr. Herbert Spencer, quoting with approval the words of Professor

Tyndall given above, adds that 'the discipline of science is superior to that of our ordinary education, because of the *religious* culture that it gives.' Here the italics are the author's. But is it not equally true, or rather more true, that the cultivation of religion affords a discipline to the student of science which ordinary education fails to do to the same degree? Moreover science, as such, in its interpretation of the cosmic process, is professedly unmoral and unsocial until it is reinforced by religion. Professor Huxley dwells upon this in his Romanes Lecture at Oxford. It is accepted as a commonplace in modern science. 'The spirit of literature in our time,' as has been of late pointed out by Miss Wedgwood, referring to some modern novelists, 'from its approach to the spirit of science, has become less moral accordingly,' because, as she puts it, 'when Literature exchanges the selective touch of morals for the collective grasp of science she abandons her true vocation.'<sup>1</sup> For this reason, as we take it, science should, in order to become a real organon of human culture, be brought into close contact with religion, since the province of the latter is to provide the moral tendency.

Miss Wedgwood on relation of pure science to morals.

Accordingly we find that the whole trend of Mr. Kidd's argument in his well-known book

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, January, 1897, p. 66.

on *Social Evolution* goes to show that the 'supra-natural' is required to supplement the purely scientific theory of social life, since 'the essential element in all religious beliefs must apparently be the *ultra-rational* sanction which they provide for social conduct.' Reason without religion teaches us selfish prudence, but religion draws out sympathy and self-sacrifice for others, without which society could not exist; and further on he says distinctly,—

B. Kidd on  
relation of  
Christianity  
and social  
science.

'The Christian religion possessed from the outset two characteristics destined to render it an evolutionary force of the first magnitude. The first was the extraordinary strength of the *ultra-rational* sanction it provided, which was developed throughout the long period we have been considering. The second was the nature of the ethical system associated with it, which, as we shall see, comes at a later stage in suitable conditions calculated to raise the peoples coming under its influence to the highest state of social efficiency ever attained, and to equip them with most exceptional advantages in the struggle for existence with other peoples.'

Here he refers to altruism as opposed to egoism, the latter being the essential principle of purely scientific economics, the former being superadded as the moral principle of Christianity to modify and restrain its rigorous application.<sup>1</sup>

In the last place, the narrowing influences of

<sup>1</sup> See *Social Evolution* (19th thousand, 1895), pp. 109, 112, 126, 140, 141, 160, 318, 319, 321.



scientific specialism find their most effective correction in a religion which enables the mind to go beyond the limits of the phenomenal world, and to approach, if not to solve, those riddles of existence which are confessedly beyond the reach of science; for we consciously acknowledge our own impotence in unravelling the last problems of life and mind, because a circle of ignorance surrounds us like an impassable wall of mystery. In our search after the ultimate reason of things, who is it who comes to our rescue when baffled in our attempts to find a final clue to the meaning of life in the universe, but He who brought 'life and immortality to light by the Gospel?'

Religion not science solves the great life-problem.

3. *What Art Culture owes to Christianity and may learn from it.*—There are those in the present day who speak of the 'Gospel of Beauty' as in some sense superseding that of Christ, and of art culture as something altogether independent of the general cultivation of the character under the influence of the Christian religion. They seem to forget how much in the past, art was indebted to religion. Professor Draper, in his work on *The Intellectual Development of Europe*, speaks of the early alliance of Christianity with art even at the time when its attitude was antagonistic towards secular learn-

The 'Gospel of Beauty.'

Bishop  
Westcott on  
Art culture  
and Chris-  
tianity.

ing; whilst, on the contrary, amid all the splendours of Arabian civilisation in Europe during the 'Dark Ages' art received no encouragement.<sup>1</sup> How much art owes to Christianity is evidenced by the masterpieces of Gothic architecture, the great pictures of the Italian Renaissance, and the progress of music since the days of Luther. The present Bishop of Durham, in his suggestive essay on the *Relation of Christianity to Art*, has pointed out incidental allusions to early Christian art in the words of some of the fathers of the second and third centuries. He also refers to the paintings and decorations in the catacombs of Rome in the fourth century, and some warnings contained in the canon of the Synod of Elvira, to show the prevalence of artistic accessories of worship then considered, as they are by many now, as dangerous to the simplicity of the faith. He points out that Christian art everywhere made use of Pagan models, and only discouraged art where it subserved idolatrous purposes or imperilled, or seemed to imperil, the purity of the faith.<sup>2</sup> It might be supposed that as art often flourished, as it did then, in the midst of a corrupt civilisation, and thus fostered self-indulgence and

<sup>1</sup> *The Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol. i, p. 358; and vol. ii, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See Essay appended to *The Epistles of St. John*, with notes, &c. (1883), pp. 326-329.

ministered to luxury, it must have a demoralising effect, from its inherent nature and its appeals to the senses. For this reason it might be supposed that it must needs be opposed to Christianity; and there have been severe and serious Christians at all times who have entertained this view. Nor can it be denied that the history of art gives some support to the prejudice. 'The efflorescence of art is the bloom of decay' is a saying of the late Professor Jowett, recorded in his *Life and Letters*, vol. i, p. 13. When the culture of Greece was at its zenith, art and corruption were living in close proximity. The same coincidence is observed in the Italian Renaissance, and to some extent in France during the reign of Louis XIV. But it does not follow from these coincidences in time that art and degeneracy are to each other as cause to effect, though they may arise in the same period of time because of the growing wealth of the community, which serves as an encouragement to art production, and may in ministering to guilty luxury lead to moral corruption. But wealth, though it may encourage, cannot create art; the root of art creation is the higher sense of the beautiful, as the true criterion of high art appreciation is the æsthetic quality of a refined mind. 'Without soul there can be no beauty or understanding of

Art and  
moral de-  
generation.

Carriere on  
materialism  
in art.

beauty,' says M. Carriere, the Munich Professor of *Æsthetics*, in his lately published tract directed against the materialising tendencies in the theory of modern art.<sup>1</sup> Nor is Christianity in this respect behind the 'religion of humanity' as taught by Comte in recognising the educational, social, and idealising influences of art. From the first, Christian art aimed at expressing the 'divine element in life,' and symbolic art may here have served a spiritual purpose. As in everything else which it did not create anew, so here Christianity tried to transfigure art,<sup>2</sup> and use it for its own ends. But the sobriety of Christian teaching avoids exaggeration in attaching too much importance to the functions of art. Thus, *e.g.*, it does not say with Comte that 'the principal sphere of both art and science is the social life of man;' <sup>3</sup> nor, like a recent German writer, whose work has passed through a great number of editions, singling out one particular artist, Rembrandt, as the future educator of the whole nation, does

Comte on  
social  
function of  
art.

<sup>1</sup> *Materialismus und Æsthetik*, von Moritz Carriere, pp. 12, 13; also cf. an article on Mr. Ruskin as a practical teacher in the *Scottish Review* for July, 1894, pp. 33-35, where the subject is treated of more fully, and Mr. Ruskin's views corresponding with those in the text above are explained by the present writer.

Westcott, loc. cit., pp. 340, 341, 348.

<sup>3</sup> *General View of Positivism*, p. 23; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 203, 208, 210 220, 224.

it attach overmuch importance to art in the general work of culture, but uses it as one of the means of instruction and rational enjoyment, and one among many levers for raising man spiritually. As art is the representation of 'the mysterious beauty' in outward things, it is viewed from the Christian standpoint as a means to this end. Since there can be no beauty without soul, so æsthetics form the self-determined measure of inner self-culture.<sup>1</sup>

Again, as it was pointed out above how Christianity in the inculcation of the humbler virtues corrects a baneful tendency to the literary pride of intellect and the 'Pharisaism of science,' so it may not be out of place here to show how it preserves the lover of art from an elated self-consciousness, enthroned in the '*palace of art*,' which regards the rest of the world with supercilious contempt, and saying,

Christianity  
saves art  
from self-  
indulgence.

'I take possession of man's mind and deed,  
I care not that the sects may brawl;  
I sit as God, holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all.'

It will seem, then, that there is ample space on the common platform on which art and religion take their stand. 'High art,' like religion, is based upon unprovable intuitions, and the grand flights of spiritual ecstasy take

<sup>1</sup> Carriere, loc. cit., pp. 13, 15.

their rise in what might perhaps be called a kind of inspiration. There is a severity of conscience in both, and a feeling of reverence for what is above and beyond the common and transitory forms of life. Both exercise a tranquillising effect, and give repose to minds cast in a finer mould, specially welcome in a restless age and amid the agitations of the fleeting hour. For this reason art and religion are found to flourish and decay together—so much so, indeed, that ‘with the decay of faith, that which is sensuous usurps the place of the spiritual, and art, which takes man as the standard of the Divine, cannot but fall.’<sup>1</sup>

For a time art may continue to exist for ‘art’s sake,’ and minister to the lower propensities of a faithless generation; but Christian art is ‘revelation of the invisible.’

### *Recapitulation.*

Aims of  
Culture and  
Religion  
identical.

We have now seen how in the three directions of culture—in literature, science, and art—Christianity is the friend, not the opponent, apt to help rather than to hinder progress; that the aims of Christianity and Culture in the main are identical; that thought, feeling, and will

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, loc. cit., p. 325, and see p. 355, *ibid.*; also compare Ruskin’s *Lectures on Art*, 3rd edit., pp. 36, 37, and Pater’s *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, pp. 81 and 213.

being profoundly influenced by religion, it follows that Science, in search of truth, Art, in its attempt to give expression to the beautiful, and Literature, in making us acquainted with the best thoughts which are apt to render men good, receive help from it. The religion we profess lays stress on the importance of truth and grace in the character of its Founder, and on the pursuit of 'whatever things are lovely and of good report;' the followers of it should therefore help in advancing a 'broad culture of humanism and scientific thought.' Those who profess to follow the true, the beautiful, and the good—and, we repeat it, this is the expressed aim of culture—will find in Christianity a power calculated in a pre-eminent degree to aid them in their pursuit. It is a power directing thought, stimulating feeling, and bracing up the will to high effort, supplying the highest motives for self-culture. For Christianity not only inculcates the duty of self-development to fit man for his social sphere here, but it prepares him for his higher life hereafter. It has been also shown how much need there is for the correction of certain unwholesome tendencies in the process of culture, and to what extent, by the confession of some of its best representatives, Christianity supplies the remedy. It will help the reader if,

Christianity  
a help to  
self-culture.



before proceeding to the next stage of our inquiry, we show how far the past history of European culture bears out what has been stated in the course of our argument thus far.

### III. HISTORICAL PROOF IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE FOREGOING.

SPEAKING of Hellenistic culture, and that most comprehensive organisation of human knowledge, the Museum of Alexandria, as a later offshoot of it, and tracing the course of its development through the ages of inquiry, faith, doubt, and reason, Professor Draper is constrained to admit that on reaching the last stage 'Greek intellectual life had passed the period of its maturity, and was entering on old age;' that Greek intellect was passing into decrepitude, and the moral condition of the European world was in antagonism to scientific progress.<sup>1</sup> He shows how that most splendid effort of ancient culture ended at last in 'garrulity and mysticism,' the Neo-Platonism of Alexandria being 'the last expiring effort of Grecian philosophy.' The reason for this, according to Draper, is simply old age, which brings with it, by a natural process, decay and death. Matthew Arnold gives a better reason.

Weakness  
of  
Hellenistic  
culture.

<sup>1</sup> Loc. cit. supra, vol. i, pp. 205, 206; *ibid.*, p. 216.

‘Apparently,’ he says in his *Culture and Anarchy*, ‘it was the Hellenic conception of human nature which was unsound, for the world could not live by it. . . . Therefore the bright promise of Hellenism faded, and Hebraism ruled the world’ (p. 96). By Hebraism he means the serious view of life and duty as presented in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the New Testament. He goes on to show how, to the world morally enervated, Christianity came as a great deliverance, and by assimilating what was good in Greek culture preserved so much of it from utter ruin.

Hellenistic  
conception  
of humanity  
corrected  
by the  
Scriptures.

Again, when with the revival of Hellenistic culture in the fifteenth century ‘the springs of antique wisdom and philosophy began once more to fertilise the Christian world,’ it was accompanied by the same moral weakness, to quote once more Matthew Arnold, the devoted friend of Hellenism, as a witness :

‘The Renaissance, that great re-awakening of Hellenism, that irresistible return of humanity to nature and to seeing things as they are, which in art, in literature, and in physics produced such splendid fruits, had, like the anterior Hellenism of the Pagan world, a side of moral weakness, and of relaxation or insensibility of the moral fibre, which in Italy showed itself with the most startling plainness, but which in France, England, and other countries was apparent too,’ and ‘provoked a reaction’ (p. 101).

Thus, by the confession of its strongest advo-

cates, Hellenistic culture divorced from vital religion is too weak to survive. And, descending still further down the stream of intellectual development, we find the history of culture repeating itself in this respect at least. For in our own century, and in the present day as formerly, modern culture, so much under the influence of Hellenism, shows signs of ending in a kind of vague and feeble mysticism. Goethe himself said at the close of his life, and in reference to the *quasi*-religious close of the *Faust*, 'In old age we all become mystics.' In the same way the great Russian novelist Gogol became a religious mystic shortly before his death, and both Pater and Symonds at the close of their career showed similar signs of a tendency towards some mystical form of Christian faith. The same is true of the revival of mysticism in the most recent productions of French literature. In all these instances—and others might be given—we notice a hunger of the soul for greater completeness than that which culture can give, which it tries to appease in some form of mystical faith. The same truth is brought out incidentally in a typical American novel of the present day, entitled *Illumination*. Here the heroine, saturated with Hellenistic thought and sentiment, is represented as strangely deficient in moral force; whilst the

Modern instances to prove need of faith in men of culture.

hero, her victim, is brought to the verge of ruin, not so much by her personal fascination as by the dazzling light of that sceptical illumination which undermines his faith,—he, through her, thus becomes a victim of culture. The pictures of social life presented in some typical modern writers of fiction show also a tendency to undisciplined self-indulgence as the accompaniment of purely humanistic culture, and a similar inability to maintain a high moral and spiritual standard without the aid of religion.

Culture in itself takes no account of the great primal defect in human nature, the fact of sin, and the consequent need not only of development but of regeneration. Therefore no system that would elevate merely by instruction, whether in Literature, Art, or Science, will permanently raise mankind. Literature becomes corrupt, Art licentious, Science godless. Where there is no high moral ideal, the ‘spirituality’ at which culture professes to aim becomes degraded into sensuality, and the more exquisite the refinement, the deeper becomes the taint of vice. This lesson is impressed upon the whole history of civilisation; and while, as shown above, Christianity is in harmony with every form of true culture, we might go further, and assert that the moral renovation wrought in the forgiveness and removal of sin through Jesus

Culture in  
itself  
incapable of  
raising man.

Christianity  
and the  
'religion of  
culture.'

Eucken on  
spiritual  
religion and  
Culture.

Christ is the preliminary step to deliver culture from grossness and degradation, and to make it truly helpful in the growth of humanity towards purity and real greatness. Hence the necessity of faith in a divinely human nature like that of Christ, and of the moral strength which is generated by constant attempts to become, through the power of the Holy Spirit, assimilated to His nature, being made conformable to His likeness, in whom the fulness of Godhead dwelt bodily. In this way the faith founded by Him becomes a great world-power, and in this consists the immeasurable superiority of Christianity as compared with the 'religion of Culture.' 'The one spiritual world is manifested to man,' says a recent German writer in a profound volume on *The Struggle for Spiritual Life*, 'in a twofold manner; mediately and conditionally through culture, immediately through religion: in both cases the merely human has to be overcome, and spiritual has to be acquired. Neither can do without the other, and yet they cannot aid each other unless they can both move away from and towards each other, be at war and at peace. Only thus can be attained all that is attainable by man.'<sup>1</sup>

But what is their exact relationship, and how

<sup>1</sup> R. Eucken. *Der Kampf um einen geistigen Lebensinhalt*, 1896, p. 325.

far is it possible to regulate this movement of mutual attraction and repulsion between culture and religion ?

To say with Goethe that piety is a means of attaining to the purest restfulness of mind, which enables it to reach the highest stage of culture, is to reverse the order and lower the character of religious devoutness. On the other hand, there is no need for dreading to transplant the 'flower of classic grove' on the consecrated soil of Christianity. We must not forget the regard for the supreme Power expressed by classic poets like Homer and Virgil, and the seriousness of purpose exhibited by the Greek tragedians to find a solution for the problems of existence; and we must remember, too, that it is not only freedom, as Lowell reminds us, which dwells—

Piety not the means but the end of culture.

‘With men of culture, trained and fortified,  
Who bitter duty to sweet lust prefer,’

but that Culture and Christianity may peacefully dwell together. For, in the words of Mrs. E. B. Browning,

‘Civilisation perfected  
Is fully developed Christianity,’

on the principle laid down by the late Principal Shairp, that ‘Culture must culminate in Religion, and Religion must expand into Culture.’ In that case, as the same graceful writer puts it,

Shairp on Culture and Religion.

culture 'is transmuted from an intellectual attainment into a spiritual grace.'<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. THE TRUE RELATION OF CULTURE TO RELIGION.

It now remains for us to delineate the respective spheres of Culture and Religion as powers for good in the world. This we propose doing again under the same three heads as before.

1. *The Relation between Christianity and Literary Culture.*—Here it is well to call to mind the principal functions of literary culture, which consist in furnishing noble ideals contained in the best writings, and in training the mind to think and express its thought in choice language, and generally in refining, moulding, and adding flexibility to human character. All this accords with Christian principle. All this can be done, and done better, with the aid of Christian faith. In fact, the cheapening of literature, the founding of free libraries in the present day, with other means adopted for the purpose of spreading culture among those formerly excluded, must be ascribed to the indirect influence of Christianity. For in the ancient Pagan civilisations, as among those moderns who are under the influence of Pagan modes of

Exclusive  
use of  
Pagan  
civilisation.

<sup>1</sup> *Culture and Religion in some of their Relations*, pp. 14, 15, 62, 125.



thought, culture is reserved for that small and wealthy class which alone can without stint indulge in literary tastes. For the same reason it is in Christian and notably in Protestant communities that popular education has made most progress. This follows from the Christian principle of spiritual equality. If unchristian and even antichristian individuals or associations here and there have been eager to spread culture among the masses with the object of enlightening them, it is because they are living and acting in an atmosphere of enlightened Christian opinion. If the Christian Church has at times lost sight of this duty, the error has been acknowledged and the neglect amply atoned for since; it may at the present moment be affirmed without fear of contradiction that the value of culture is fully acknowledged by the Christian Church. It may also be admitted that with the spread of culture in Christian countries there has grown up a more tolerant spirit, but in some cases, it must be admitted, a loss of earnestness, of which the modern amenities of religious controversy are a sign and proof; so that, by mutual action and reaction, culture and religion have both been advanced.

General  
culture  
flourishes  
in Christian  
countries.

Again, if the complaints of Emerson and Matthew Arnold have some foundation of truth, that the pursuit of a material civilisation in such

Christian countries as the British Empire and the United States leaves the mind in a state of arrested development as far as the higher culture is concerned, and that this complaint affects the middle or commercial classes more than any others, it has to be noted, also, on the other hand, that the highly cultured not infrequently suffer from retarded development of the spiritual faculty, which prevents a proportionate attention being given to the cultivation of religion. 'Knowledge is power,' says Mr. Froude somewhere, 'and wealth is power; and harnessed, as in Plato's fable, to the chariot of the soul, and guided by wisdom, they may bear it through the circle of the stars; but left to their own guidance, or reined by a fool's hand, the wild horses may bring the poor fool to Phaeton's end, and set a world on fire.' Christianity, in guiding the chariot of the soul by means of 'spiritual understanding,' preserves it from the dangers which attend both material and intellectual wealth.

But, in order to harmonious development of the whole man, culture must be considered as a power subordinate to but associated with religion, in co-operation with each other. Together they give ethical and æsthetic completeness to human personality for the purposes of the life that now is, and also prepare it for that which

Froude on  
danger of  
culture  
without  
spiritual  
discipline.

is to be. If a 'disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world' be, as Mr. Arnold declares it to be, the true task of literary culture—that portion of it thus taught by the great Master come from God, and that body of 'sacred literature' which has gathered round His person and work, have their superior claims on our attention. This will be the more readily seen, if it be recollected that the most eminent men of letters, such as Dante and Shakespeare, as well as some of the modern heroes of literature, confessedly draw their inspiration from it.

Again, let us look at the question from another, which we may call the negative, point of view. Speaking of the effect of scepticism on poetry, Mr. Selkirk remarks, 'Faith is the tonic of the poetical scale; . . . when doubt is made use of at all in poetry, . . . it is introduced more as a foil to faith.' And again, 'Conviction alone will not produce poetry, but it is an essential component of the atmosphere on which alone poetry can be sustained;' and what 'gives tone and colour to much of our later sceptical poetry' is 'the natural feeling of regret towards a departing faith.' This 'lies at the heart of some of the most eloquent passages of the (late) laureate's immortal elegy (*In Memoriam*), and

Faith as  
pre-  
requisite  
to literary  
vitality.

is the principal source of the mournful and pathetic inspiration of Mr. Arnold.'<sup>1</sup> In the same way Goethe affirms in the most positive manner that the most creative epochs in the history of literature have been those in which faith, not unfaith, has flourished; from which it would follow that the higher flights of imagination require an atmosphere of belief for their circumambient ether; that to soar in those immortal flights of fancy is impossible in a vacuum of unbelief; that not only the minister of religion, but also the minstrel, requires a divine inspiration in his mission to mankind; that the apostles of secular and sacred culture, like the apostles of Christ, will each perform their special function best if they go two and two together, joining heart and hand in their work. A liberal education—and what is culture but that?—says Seneca, is imparted not because it can give virtue, but because it prepares the mind for receiving it. So, too, Mr. John Morley, in a lecture on the *Study of Literature* delivered at the Mansion House ten years ago, remarks, 'We conceive the end of education on its literary side to be to make a man and not a cyclopædia, to make a citizen and not a book of elegant extracts.' Similarly, general

J. Morley  
on  
impractical  
tendency of  
literary  
culture.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics and Æsthetics of Modern Poetry*, pp. 8, 11, 43, and *passim*.

culture is useful if combined with the religious cultivation of mind and heart, to prepare both for a due reception of the divine seed and a proper preparation for our 'citizenship which is from above' (Phil. iii. 20, R. V.).

Here, too, as in the case of St. Paul, who thought it not wrong to become, as classical scholar, a 'Greek to the Greeks,' though proud to be also a 'Hebrew of the Hebrews,' all the resources of secular culture may and ought, as certainly they can, add to the grace and strength of the Christian character, the wealth of ideas accumulated through the ages serving to enrich and render more valuable Christian culture in all its branches.

2. *The Relation between Christianity and Scientific Culture.*—In the case of literary culture we had to call attention to the modern tendency of considering the former as co-ordinate with, if not as superior to religion. In the case of scientific culture we have to settle the question how far, as modern men of science assert, there exists an actual conflict between science and religion,—a conflict, moreover, in which religion is being completely worsted and driven out of the field. Mr. Buckle, Professor Draper, and quite recently Professor White,<sup>1</sup>

Supposed  
conflict  
between  
scientific  
culture and  
religion.

Buckle.  
Draper.  
Professor  
White.

<sup>1</sup> *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, by Andrew Dickson White, late President and Professor of History at Cornell University, New York, 1896.

have in their respective works dwelt on this warfare of science with Christian theology. Thus Professor Draper, in the work already referred to, as well as in the later volume noted below,<sup>1</sup> takes delight in pointing out how 'Christian bigotry' all along endeavoured to retard, whilst Arabian philosophy succeeded in advancing the intellectual life in Europe. 'When Europe was hardly more enlightened than Caffraria is now, the Saracens were cultivating and even creating science,'<sup>2</sup> their medical colleges being the foci of learning, and the Arabs thus restored experimental science. True, he acknowledges that the monasteries produced 'many cultivators of letters, who transmitted to us the literary relics of the old times.' But the general tendency of the work referred to is to depress the merits of Christianity, and to extol those of Islam, forgetting the important distinction that it was not Islam as a creed which encouraged, nor Christianity in its essential principles which opposed, the progress of science. It was rather ecclesiasticism—ignorant ecclesiasticism—misunderstanding the spirit of Christianity, acting contrary to its principles, which did this; whilst it was Arabian philosophy, irrespective of the

Islam and  
Christianity  
in relation  
to scientific  
discoveries.

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (International Science Series).

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, vol. i, p. 412, cf. pp. 387-391.

creed of Mahomet, which proved the friend of literature and science. In the most luminous epochs of Church history the 'seekers after God' and those in search of scientific truth are found treading the same path. At the very time when the 'Dark Ages' set in with the incursion of the barbarians who swept away the ancient civilisation, the Christian Church absorbed its remains, and trained these barbarians for the due reception of it in course of time. If some obscurantist Churchmen repressed learning and opposed scientific discovery, others, at the time of the Renaissance, even some of them the highest office-bearers in the Roman Church, became the patrons of learning; whilst others, again, like Erasmus and von Hutten at the time of the Reformation, gave back to Europe all the treasures of the ancient culture. It is 'the barbarian blood in our veins,' as Amiel writes, which is the reason why 'we lack measure, harmony, and grace' (which are the result of culture), not the repressive measures of pre-reformation or post-reformation obscurantism in the Christian Church. Bigots there have been in all ages who have opposed the progress of science in their intolerance, as there are scientific bigots in the present day who pronounce their anathemas against religious opponents, real or imaginary. The fault is in the indi-

Reformers  
the patrons  
of learning.



Christian  
scientists.

vidual character of the representatives of science and religion respectively. There have been devout Christians who cultivated science with assiduity and success, such as Kepler and Newton, Boyle and Bacon, Faraday and Romanes. There have been eminent scientific specialists utterly ignorant of, or indifferent to, the 'deep things of God,' which are 'spiritually discerned.' There have been spiritually-minded Christians in abundance dreading the advance and impervious to the influence of the light of new scientific discoveries. But this one-sidedness in each must not be attributed to their respective religious or scientific prepossessions. The observation of scientific phenomena and the framing of scientific theories with a view to further discoveries is not unlike the process of religious inquiry, though there are mysteries of the faith, as there are mysteries of nature, which baffle human scrutiny. But in the case of both there is ample room left for a dutiful and constant pursuit of truth. As in the case of Thomas Aquinas, in a church system least friendly towards independent scientific research, or in that of the writers in the work known as *Lux Mundi*, commended for this reason by the late Archbishop Magee, or in that of the late Professor Drummond in his brilliant and original essays, efforts have always been made by

Thomas  
Aquinas  
and  
*Lux Mundi*.

eminent Christian scholars to reconcile science with religion at times of great intellectual activity. Nor should the weighty remark of Principal Shairp be forgotten, that 'science and philosophy have something to do with shaping the intellectual forms in which spiritual truth shall be expressed.' If religion can teach science something concerning the limits of human knowledge, Mr. Huxley reminds us in one of his early *Lay Sermons* that in 'this consciousness of the limitations of man, this sense of an open secret which he cannot penetrate, lies the essence of all religion; and the attempt to embody it in the forms furnished by the intellect is the origin of the higher theologies.'<sup>1</sup> Here, then, there is common ground for each to take its stand. The triumphs of science in the past may teach theologians not to be too eager in condemning those results of science which seem at first to contradict long-cherished Christian truths, for such have often proved in the end to be its strongest supports. So, too, the repeated revival of religious belief, after lapses into temporary scepticism when dazzled for a time by the new light of fresh scientific discoveries, or by

Huxley on  
limitation of  
scientific  
knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> See Shairp, *Culture and Religion*, p. 118; *Essays selected from Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews*, by J. H. Huxley (People's Edit., 1871), p. 12; also compare Haeckel's *Monism*, &c., p. 30.

the false or partially false light of tempting scientific theories, should teach men of science not to be on the one hand over-precipitate in rejecting time-honoured beliefs which have survived all attacks, nor, on the other, to be too peremptory in their demand on religion to surrender her position at discretion when that of science itself is admitted to be in some respects equally insecure.

It may be readily conceded that from an ethical point of view religion has profited to some extent by the recent gains of science. Thus, *e. g.*, the great truth of the 'Reign of Law,' that 'nothing is that errs from law,' as applied to conduct, adds to the authority of religion, that of science bidding us—

'To live by law,  
Acting the law we live by without fear.'

Christianity  
affords  
helps to  
study of  
science.

On the other hand, the cultivation of a tender conscience, promoted by such a religion as Christianity, will do much towards preparing the mind for that conscientious and cautious pursuit of knowledge which is most essential to an accurate study of nature, and so far tends to promote true scientific culture. In short, there is ample room for mutual toleration and friendly co-operation between science and religion. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his work on education,

quotes the following words from Professor Huxley :

‘True science and true religion are twin sisters, and the separation of either from the other is sure to prove the death of both. Science prospers exactly in proportion as it is religious, and religion flourishes in exact proportion to the scientific depth and firmness of its basis. The great deeds of philosophers have been less the fruit of their intellect than of the direction of that intellect by an eminently religious tone of mind. Truth has yielded herself rather to their patience, their love, their single-heartedness, and their self-denial, than to their logical acumen.’<sup>1</sup>

Huxley on  
true science  
and  
religion.

Let, then, religion, as the elder sister, take the lead in the ‘noble choir of sister sciences;’ let them learn from her to sit, like Mary, at the feet of Jesus, to learn the ‘one thing needful,’ as well as to concern themselves in collecting all that may be known and utilised for the practical needs of life, and without in so doing underrating the value of the things immortal and eternal, that perish not in the using.

For this reason let a wise suspense be exercised in mutual criticisms and censure, both on the part of science and religion, remembering that the apparent boundary between science and nescience is by no means fixed, that every new scientific discovery requires a rectification of

Suspense a  
duty in  
mutual  
criticism.

<sup>1</sup> *Education* (4th thousand of the cheap edition, 1880), p. 45.

frontier, and also that, as the horizon widens, the border line must be shifted between the known and the unknown. The actual reaction against the assumptions of science now setting in is a sign of that kind of scientific scepticism which has always succeeded an over-confident dogmatism, and ends in seeking refuge in a vague religious mysticism, the asylum of minds wearied by fruitless controversies and a worse than fruitless warfare between science and religion. The 'tyranny of theology' has been assigned as the reason why the progress of science has been retarded in times past. May not a similar charge against 'the tyranny of culture' in *its* assertive dogmatism prove a hindrance to the progress of religion? It is no longer the religious enthusiasts who are the enemies of scientific progress, but it is those whom such a writer as Leslie Stephen describes as the 'feather-headed enthusiasts who take the first will-o'-the-wisp for a safe guide, and patch up a new religion out of scraps and tatters of half-misunderstood science,' who undermine the 'religion of all sensible men.' Let us remember that the final causes of things and the hidden or half-concealed truths of the cosmos require still further elucidation. Without the venture of faith men of science cannot advance a step in

Leslie  
Stephen on  
scientific  
enthusiasts.

framing hypotheses, such, *e. g.*, as the belief in the continuity of the cosmic process which underlies all scientific reasoning. Let us remember also that the whole world of appearances as perceived by the mind through the senses constitutes the deepest problem of all; and, finally, that science only presupposes the actuality of what we call facts, laying no claim to the absolute knowledge even of phenomena.<sup>1</sup> Will it not then be best, in the interests of scientific culture as well as the cultivation of truly religious minds, to pursue with modesty and moderation of tone and speech the search after truth in either, and to do this on the principle laid down by Goethe, a man of both literary and scientific culture, that ‘science and faith are not intended to exclude, but to form the complement of, each other?’

Goethe on  
science and  
faith.

3. *The Relation between Christianity and Art Culture.*—Does Christianity give scope for the development of Art? We can only reply, that depends on what is meant by art, of what kind it is, whether true art, or art false to its vocation, whether it is of such a character as to promote truth and goodness, high ideals, and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Progress of Science*, by T. V. Marmery (1895) ‘Modern science,’ says the author, ‘has brought the solution of every physical problem within the compass of *possibility*’ (p. 265).

Function of  
art from  
Christian  
standpoint.

reverence for divine things, or whether it simply tries to minister to sensuous minds, or minds keenly sensitive to pleasure, seeking this in the beauty of form or sound, in painting, sculpture, poetry, and music, or the presentation of life in the drama. The function of true art, no doubt, is to present things in the aspect of beauty, and that of Christian art to present the divine ideal of things in the most captivating form through the senses to the soul. Thus the visible becomes a kind of revelation of the invisible. Art thus is symbolical of the divine reality behind the appearances of things. Art has three principal directions of purpose, as laid down by Mr. Ruskin in his Art lectures at Oxford :—‘ first, that of enforcing the religion of men ; secondly, that of perfecting their ethical state ; thirdly, that of doing them material service ’ (p. 37). Accordingly we find the greatest artists—such, for example, as the late Mr. Pater—in literary art displaying a severe conscientiousness in style, a sober, almost austere dignity of diction, from a deep sense of their high calling. Where the lower motive predominates, there, whatever the temporary enjoyment which may be derived from art, religion is the loser, art is degraded into an instrument for amusing indolence or satisfying idle sensibility. As the same writer observes,



purely realistic or imitative art, having for its object merely the representation of appearances, does not promote truth, *i. e.* ideal truth, but only a faint and distorted image. 'The mere copies of nature,' says Sir Joshua Reynolds in his *Seven Discourses on Art*, 'can never produce anything great; can never raise and enlarge the conceptions or warm the heart of the spectator.' And again, what 'the artist calls the ideal beauty is the leading principle by which works of genius are conducted.' This constitutes the important difference between heathen and Christian art. The final cause of the former is pleasure mainly, if not solely; that of the latter spiritual and moral elevation. 'The beginnings of social revolution,' says William Morris, 'must be the foundations of the rebuilding of the art of the people,—that is to say, the *pleasure of life*.'<sup>1</sup> 'Pluck out the right eye' if it offends, says our Lord, referring to the lusts of the eye; 'it is better for thee [good for thee, R. V.] to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the eternal fire' (R. V.). Better far, that is, to be deficient in some of the refining influences of art culture than to enjoy all the treasures of art, so it becomes a means only for materialistic indulgence.

Sir J.  
Reynolds.

Difference  
between  
Christian  
and  
heathen  
art.

<sup>1</sup> *Art and Socialism*, a lecture delivered before the Secular Society of Leicester, p. 50.

Mundane  
character of  
Hellenic  
culture.

'Breadth, centrality, with blitheness and repose,' says W. Pater, 'are the marks of Hellenic culture.'<sup>1</sup> Art culture of this sort adds to 'the free zest and relish of the world.' The Christian or 'Hebraistic' view of life, if more serious and sombre, is also more severe in its expression; it presents us with a deeper view of life and the struggle with sin and sorrow, concentrating its attention on the sadder side of existence. The art Pater speaks of 'comes to you,' as he says at the close of the volume referred to, 'professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to *your moments as they pass, and simply for these moments' sake.*' Christianity is not satisfied with momentary gratification, such as this 'art for art's sake;' art from the Christian point of view should subserve the higher spiritual purpose of drawing attention to the divine elements of life,<sup>2</sup> 'the patterns of things in the heavens' (Heb. ix. 23), *i. e.* Christian art is symbolical of diviner truths. From the 'mount of vision' the truly inspired artist descends as well as the man who holds 'communion with the skies,' as Cowper calls

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> See Westcott, *loc. cit.*, pp. 339-341, 348, 349, 360. 'Religion,' remarks the author of *Rembrandt als Erzieher*, 'is the highest form of applied art; art pretending to be pious is worse than godless, but a pious art is better than either' (pp. 26, 27).

the man of prayer, to address themselves to the baser facts of life, but irradiated by the divine reflection, and the mind itself bearing a divine impress which communicates itself to other minds. Thus Mr. Balfour, in his chapter on Naturalism and *Æsthetic*,<sup>1</sup> writes :

Art inspired  
of faith in  
the super-  
natural.

‘When we look back on those too rare moments when feelings, stirred in us by some beautiful object, not only seem wholly to absorb us, but to raise us to the vision of things far above the ken of bodily sense or discursive reason, we cannot acquiesce in any attempt at explanation which confines itself to the bare enumeration of psychological and physiological causes and effects. . . . We must believe that somewhere and for something there shines an unchanging splendour of beauty, of which in nature and in art we see, each of us from our own standpoint, only passing gleams and stray reflections, whose different aspects we cannot now co-ordinate, whose import we cannot fully comprehend, but which at least is something other than the chance play of subjective sensibility or the far-off echo of ancestral lusts. No such mystical creed can, however, be squeezed out of observation and experiment ; science cannot give it us ; nor can it be forced into any sort of consistency with the naturalistic theory of the universe.’

Mr. Balfour  
on  
mysticism  
in art.

Hence, to conclude, as the body without the soul is lifeless, so art without religion lacks vitality. As the soul shines in a thousand subtle ways through the body, and needs it as a vehicle of self-manifestation, so art as ancillary to religion may become its sacred shrine, and, as such, serve visibly to demonstrate when inspired from above its hidden loveliness.

<sup>1</sup> *Foundations of Belief*, 2nd edit., pp. 65, 66.

## CONCLUSION.

'Sweetness  
and light.'

And the  
Light of the  
world.

The result, then, of our inquiry amounts to this:—Religion has nothing to fear from a diffusion of 'sweetness and light;' on the contrary, intellectual illumination and the cultivation of the gentler arts are enhanced by means of 'that true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' In other words, the progress of culture and civilisation is in a great measure helped forward by the spreading light of the Gospel, and Christianity has the power of stimulating and directing tendencies in modern culture which are right in themselves, but which need its vivifying impetus and modifying force. We have seen this attested by the history of culture in the past. It has also been shown that Christianity and Culture may be regarded as co-operating powers working in society, mutually dependent on and supporting each other. But also, since the aims of religion are higher than those of culture, so, too, its relative importance must be considered as greater; that it aims at no less than the development of the whole man, spiritually as well as intellectually, so as to fit him to glorify God here and hereafter; whereas culture in its main branches aims at the equipment

of all his faculties as far as he is concerned in the affairs of this life only. It follows from this that the 'finished man,' and the woman of 'finished education,' are those in whom 'the love of God is perfected.' All that culture of itself can do is to 'give tone running through conduct,' whilst the cultivation of religion forms, and is able to transform, character; and as it has been well said by an independent advocate of secular culture, 'it is better to have character without culture than culture without character.' The greatest masters of man are, therefore, not 'the high priests of literature,' but those who, like 'the High Priest set over the house of God,' make the cultivation of mind and heart subservient to the higher purpose of qualifying mortals for immortality, where ultimately life may become a 'constant hymn to intellectual beauty,' in 'the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor. iv. 6).

Character  
of cultured :—  
Chris-  
tianity.

Thus it will be seen what Goethe says of art, that 'it rests on a kind of religious sentiment, a deep, imperturbable earnestness, and that is the reason why it so readily unites itself to religion,' is only true if art, our modern art, be cultivated with that seriousness of purpose which is akin to religious earnestness. In that case art becomes the kinswoman and handmaid of religion, producing that liberation of mind

and expansion of heart which lift man above the vulgar cares, pursuits, and pleasures of this sublunary existence, this 'cabined, crippled, low-roofed life.'

And since æsthetics and ethics touch each other in many points, and, as Ruskin puts it, 'what we *like* determines what we *are*, and is the sign of what we are; and since to teach taste is inevitably to form character,'<sup>1</sup> and conversely, as Emerson says, 'in art does Nature work through the will of man, filled with the beauty of her first works,'<sup>2</sup> we must carry about us the highest ideals, if we would profit by the best culture. But the highest human ideal known to us is 'Christ within you, the hope of glory.' In this case literary culture becomes, indeed, the study of perfection with the absorption of the best ideas extant.

Christ the  
highest  
Ideal.

Danger of  
scientific  
intolerance.

We have also seen that the pursuit of science, in adding to our knowledge of natural phenomena and their relation, has nothing now to fear from religious obscurantism and violent opposition, as in the times of old, but that it is rather in danger of treating with insolent intolerance or impatient indifference its former rival; that in assuming the dictator-

<sup>1</sup> *The Crown of Wild Olive* (2nd edit.), 1882, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Complete Works*, vol. ii, p. 149; and see *ante*, the whole of this essay on beauty, *ibid.*

ship of modern thought much that calls itself science has become as intolerant of opposition and as jealous of supreme rule as her quondam opponent; and that, taught by the logic of events, both science and religion alike should leave ample room for free inquiry, whether in the domain of science or in the realm of theological knowledge; in short, that they should extend to each other the hand of fellowship.

Remembering that faith and reason have each a special function to perform, though practically there can be no scientific theory framed without some exercise of faith, and no Christian doctrine received *ex animo* without the consent of reason, yet in the discovery of truth no one formula can cover completely the field of both; 'we cannot measure art, civilisation, and religion by a physiological standard, because they are not susceptible of such measurement.' Or, in the words of Dr. Martineau, whom few, if any, will accuse of making too large a demand on human credulity, or yielding too readily to theological bias,—

Room for  
faith and  
reason.

Martineau  
on sub-  
ordination  
of culture to  
religion.

'The disputes between science and faith can no more be closed by inventing "religions of culture" than the boundary quarrels of nations by setting up neutral provinces in the air.

'Heartily as I would welcome the enthusiasms for knowledge and for art, as well as for right, into the circle of religious affinities, and recognise in their ablest representa-



tives an inspiration akin to that of genuine piety; emphatically, therefore, as I deny that there is any uncongeniality between the modern culture and the ancient sanctities, I yet must hold that, in the order of dependence, these minor forms of devoutness hang upon the major; and that if we are to give them a home in the widened category of religion it must be as children of the house, and not as wielding its supreme authority. Their functions are sacred because concerned with a universe already consecrated by a Divine presence, gleaming through all its order and loveliness: suppose its inner meaning gone, let its truth be only useful and its beauty only pleasant, and would any lofty genius be taken captive by them and bow before them? Rightly enough are the men of science called ministering priests of nature; but this they could not be unless nature were a temple filled with God.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Study of Religion* (2nd edit.), vol. i, pp. 11, 12.



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